

# PC action

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ISSUE 4  
FEBRUARY 1994

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the top of the league!  
GREMLIN GRAPHICS



### WIZARD

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which only the best prevail!  
PSYGNOSIS

ISSN 1350-7443



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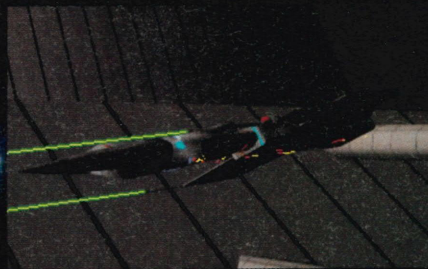
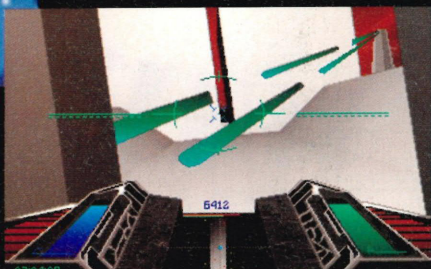
# DELTA V

IT'S NOT A GAME . . .

**YOUR MISSION:** YOU CONTROL THE MOST AGILE RACER KNOWN TO MAN AS YOU FLY DOWN THE 256 COLOUR, 3-D, POLYGONAL-SHADED LANDSCAPE AT SPEEDS WHERE THOUGHT AND ACTION ARE ONE AND MISTAKES ARE PAID FOR IN BLOOD! IF YOU AND YOUR TRACE VEHICLE SURVIVE, USE YOUR BONUS POINTS TO MODIFY ITS ARMOUR, FIREPOWER OR SPEED TO SUIT YOUR STYLE, THEN JACK BACK INTO THE NET FOR ANOTHER RUN!

IN DELTA V, A NEW TYPE OF VIRTUAL REALITY HAS BEEN BROUGHT TO THE PC!





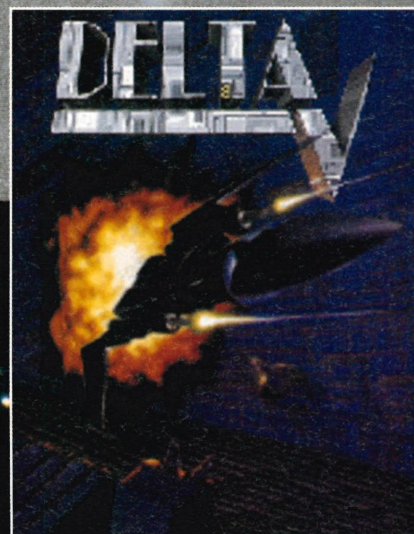
> L6 12-09-2147 - 17H34.48  
 > "So chummer, you want to know about runnin'  
 > "The Net's the most dangerous cyber-dream you'll ever have, 'cept it's not a dream. You gotta be ruthless and quick, huggin' the lattice like an Olthan lungworm on a Borian air-grazer. Once you jack in, it's just you and your Trace.  
 > "Like I always said, Netrunnin' is like a drug, the speed gets you higher than a 'ject of Cephilene Blue, but a mistake'll leave you deader than a jacked out straightliner.  
 > "That chum, is as permanent as it gets . . ."  
 > END  
 > GROTHAN JHIR, ex-Netrunner.

# IT'S A STATE OF MIND

Available on: IBM PC AND COMPATIBLES  
 (VGA, minimum 386/33 processor, minimum memory 640k Ram, 2Mb EMS memory and high density disk drive required. Sonic support: Roland™, SoundBlaster and Gravis Ultrasound.)  
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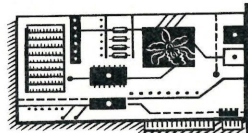
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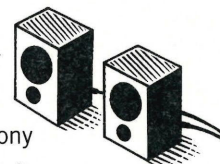
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SoundWave 32  
February 1994

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**Cover Print:** Collier/Searle/Matfield Ltd.

**Mag Printed By:** BPCC East Kilbride

**Newstrade Distribution:** Comag 0895 444055

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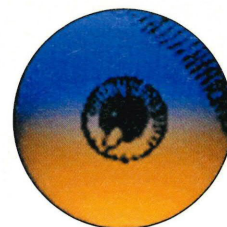
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## INSIDE WORD 20

What do Clive Barker, Terry Pratchett and Dave Gibbons have in common? Easy, you say, they are all at the forefront of British horror/sci-fi writing. Well yes, but they are also involved in developing computer games. We reveal all about this cross fertilisation of art forms



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Like a religious zealot, Sid Meier locked himself away with his computer until his aspirational projects F15 and Civilisation were completed. We talk to one of the most significant games designing talents and find that it's all a labour of love



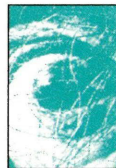
## FEATURE 75

Paris is the cultural capital of Europe, so what better base for Delphine, inspired creators of Another World and Flashback? Sharon went to Paris to look at their new project, In Extremis, and found out that plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose



## WORKSHOP 88

Meet Imagitec, enjoying their success with Humans and now working on the sequel, Evolution - Lost in Time, and let their man Piglet take you round. 'Humans made us far too much money to talk about - an obscene amount but there you go,' he says. There you go!



## THE SURGERY 97

Jurassic Park proving a pain in the neck? Getting a real headache because of King's Quest V or just plain washed up on Monkey Island? Please take a seat in the waiting room. The Doctor will be with you presently.

'This kind of technology doesn't  
 just appear, it's  
 refined over a  
 number of years'...





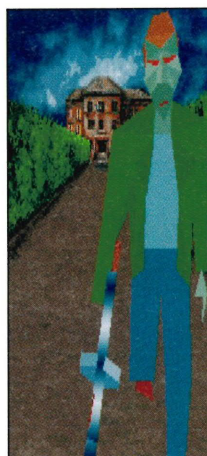


Aliens from space invade Earth! UFO is on its way... 92 A force to be reckoned with - Imagitec and Evolution 88

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PC  
Action

## COVERDISK 8

### Premier Manager 2

A sizeable chunk of the new improved smash hit game, proving there's more to football management than making sure Saint Gary eats up all his Shredded Wheat.

### Wizard

It's the best role-playing game of '94 so far and we're throwing you right into the middle of this magical mystery tour. But never fear, it's the most playable yet.



'We're hoping Inferno will be the definitive space game' 24



# HOW TO USE YOUR COVERDISK

**Beginners only:** If you know your way around your PC it's unlikely you will need this column. However, if you are one of the countless new users who are only just starting to differentiate between your DOS and your doormat please read the following carefully before starting to use your coverdisk. If you do encounter any problems whatsoever you can always give us a call on the PC Action Coverdisk Helpline. You can find the number at the bottom of this page.

**Copying disks:** You will need to copy the contents of your coverdisk onto your hard drive. This is one of the simplest operations you'll have to perform. Naturally enough you should first ensure you have enough storage space on your hard drive.

Some of the programs that come with PC Action have been crunched – electronically compressed in order to squeeze a lot more information onto the disk. This means that during the process of transferring to your hard drive it is expanded. If you need to find more space you will have to delete some of the files already on your drive.

Here is PC Action's simple to use menu system that will enable you to carry out the transfer with just a few key presses. This is all you have to do:

- ONE: Switch on your PC. Put your disk in the floppy drive (usually drive A but occasionally drive B).
- Type A: (or B: if appropriate).
- TWO: Type PCA C: – this tells your PC to install the contents on your hard disk.
- THREE: A menu will appear, asking you which of the programs you wish to install. Simply follow the onscreen instructions. Key 1 for Wizard or 2 for Premier Manager 2.

**Making backups:** If you're extremely safety conscious you may wish to make a back-up of your coverdisk. Very few people actually get around to doing this but it could lead to a number of tears if someone comes along and leaves the disk too close to the monitor and corrupts it. Fortunately, duplicating the PC Action disk couldn't be easier.

Find an empty disk you wish to use as your back-up. If it is already formatted then so much the better. If it isn't you'll have to format it as detailed in your PC's manual. Once this operation is complete you are ready to continue.

Now with your PC Action disk and the new disk at the ready, type in DISKCOPY A: A: (or B: B: if this is what your 3.5in disk drive is called). You will be prompted to swap the disks at regular intervals until the whole operation is finished.

**Note:** Before attempting to use your coverdisk always make sure it is write-protected – that is, so you can see through the hole.

**Trouble shooting:** If you have any difficulties and the on-disk help hasn't saved you, you can always call the PC Action Coverdisk Helpline. This service is provided to help with any problems you may have with your coverdisks. The number to call is 0625 859675. Please note that this service is only available on a Wednesday between 3pm and 5pm.

If there is a fault with the disk itself simply return it to this address for a replacement:

PC Action faulty disks  
T.I.B. House,  
11 Edward Street,  
Bradford,  
BD4 7BH

C O V E R G A M E 1

## PREMIER MAN

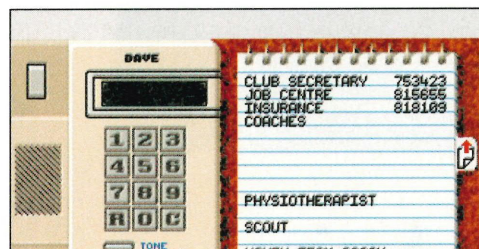
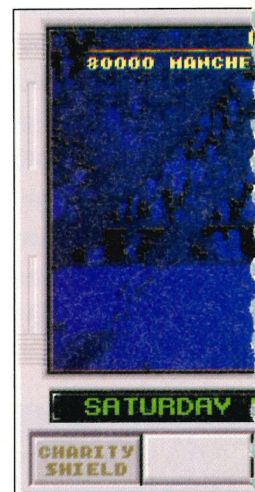


The main menu. Click on the icon you wish to call up, the whistle is to start the game

**W**hether you're a big fan of the smash hit Premier Manager and you're wondering what the sequel's like, or a newcomer to the adrenaline rush world of football management, you're going to relish our demo version of Gremlin's new game. By fine tuning PM1, programmers, Realms of Fantasy, have ensured this is the undisputed title holder in this tactical game arena.

Taking on the role of Cloughy or Kendal, you are in control of every aspect of your team's progress from training to fixtures, team selection and coaching. The actual games are played out in front of you, from your touchline view and we have included 15 games on this disk. A minimum of one hour's entertainment and pretty fast going, even by English standards.

The new improved statistics are impressive – 64 sponsors, two players, the top European teams for friendly internationals, contracts for players and 486 playing styles. The British teams have been brought bang up to date for the new season and you start our demo game in quite a commanding position with a world class line-up and three



Your personal phone line to the employees who matter. No need to dial – hi tech communication

### minimum loading requirements

MINIMUM MEMORY 560k	SOUND CARDS Adlib, SoundBlaster, Roland
MINIMUM PROCESSOR 286	MINIMUM GRAPHICS VGA
MINIMUM SPEED 16MHz	MINIMUM HARD DISK 1.2 MB
INSTALLATION Essential	CONTROLS Mouse



# AGER 2



In-match presentation is simple but exciting, and team tactics can be adjusted mid-game



Other fixtures are played out in parallel to your own efforts. Click on the power icon to leave this screen and play your own game

substitutes. Before taking your team onto the field, a couple of things need organising, so get on the phone to the job centre and hire a coach and physio. Training, fixtures and sponsorship boards are all under your control, so take care to keep an eye on things.

The main menu screen is your power base, so click on power with your mouse to access this. The whistle emblem will start the game off and the question mark allows you to alter the specifications for this. It's best to play the game at a medium speed and to keep an eye on play because you may want to change your tactics mid-half.

You do this by clicking on 'sub' and all the options are there. After the match you can view all the stats. With all these graphs, charts, faxes, meetings with the club secretary and direct interaction with the players, you're going to have a busy, if short stay as manager.

Once installed on your hard drive, you run by typing from the c:\prompt **CD PREMIER2**, followed by **PM2** to play the game. You will need a mouse to click through the windows and the rest is pretty self-explanatory.

*Please note: there is no option to quit to DOS, once you are in the game. You have to reboot.*

PUBLISHER	Virgin	CONTACT	081-960 2255
PRICE	£34.99	RELEASE DATE	Out Now

## COVER GAME 2

# WIZARD



When you enter the shop you can buy and sell equipment. Items are paid for with gold so you'd better make sure that you've got enough on hand

If you click on the bed your party will be able to rest and hopefully improve their vital statistics

**W**ritten by the creator of Legend, Wizard by Psygnosis is an RPG adventure game set in a mythical world where monsters, wizards and warriors rule.

In this exclusive PC Action

demo you begin the game with a pre-defined set of four characters, each with their own skills which have been honed to a reasonably high level. They can cast spells and have strengthened statistics and these will enable you to progress throughout the demo. The finished game, of course, won't be so easy and you'll have to build your characters statistics and spell casting abilities by moving up through the levels.

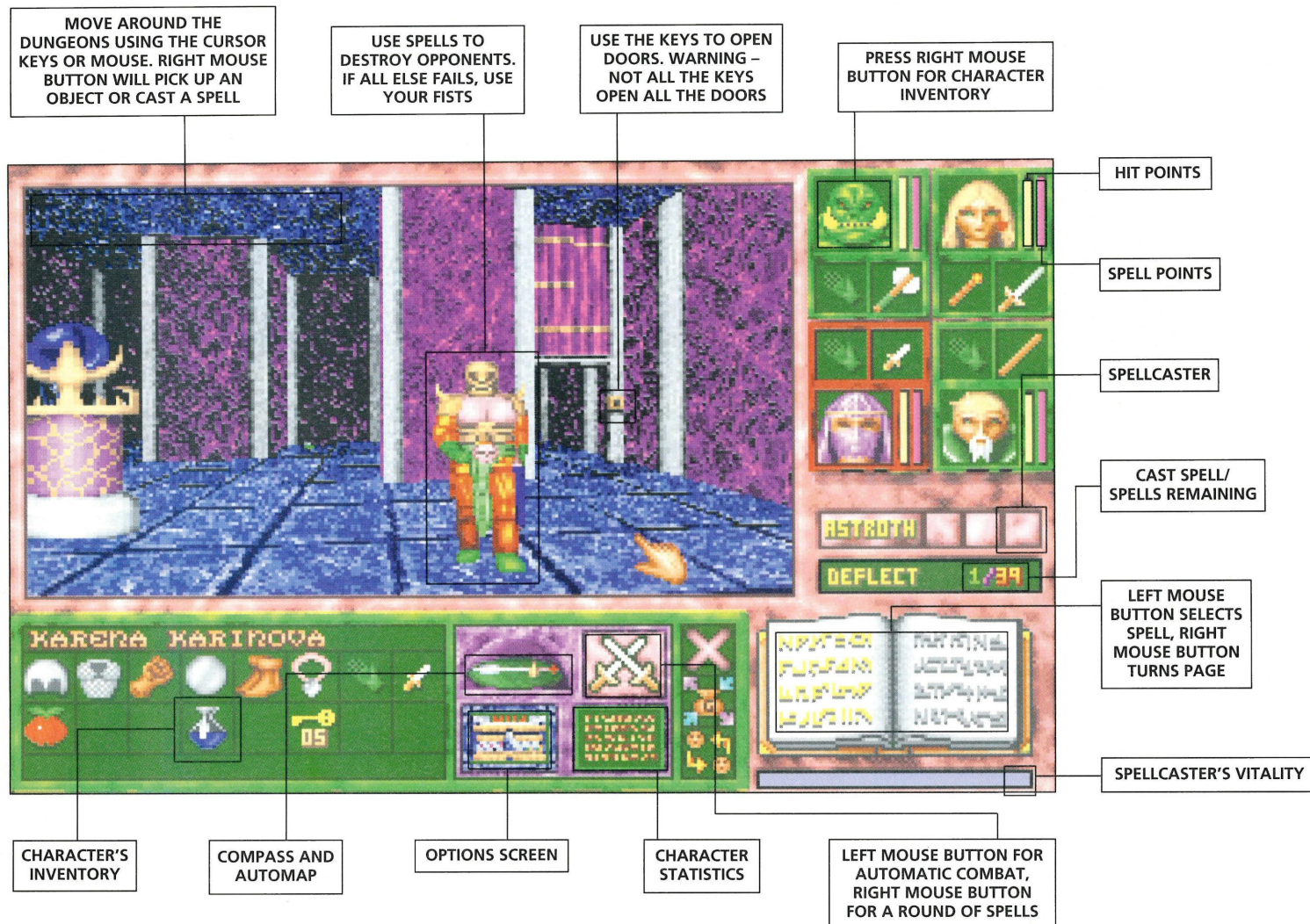
You can guide your team around the dungeons via the mouse or keyboard. Mouse is recommended for the selection of characters, weapons and inventory objects, while keyboard proves best for controlling movement.

Any objects that you come across can be collected by positioning the mouse pointer (a hand) over them so that it turns into a grasping hand. When you click the right mouse button the object will be picked up and can then be placed in any of the characters' backpacks by clicking in their inventory or on their face image.

The dungeons in this demo of Wizard are guarded by powerful warriors who will attack if disturbed. Spells are your most powerful ally and these can be cast by placing the mouse pointer on the target and clicking the right mouse button. Different types of spells can be selected from the spell book at the bottom-right of the Normal display.

You can find out what a character is carrying in his or her backpack by clicking on their face image with the right mouse button. This will call up the inventory which is made up of 16 slots, eight of which are reserved for clothing and hand held objects such as swords, dagger and double-sided axes. You can ▶





► easily exchange objects between characters by clicking on the object with the left mouse button and clicking again on the receiver's face image. This will drop the object into their inventory.

Manipulating objects is simple. If you wanted to open a locked gate, for example, you would click on a key in a character's inventory and then the hand pointer would be replaced by the key which you would then left click in the gate lock. Provided the door isn't jammed or requires a special key it should open.

The stamina of characters can be topped up with food and potions. To eat food or drink a potion simply click on it with the right mouse button while it is in the inventory.

Littered around the dungeons you will find gold pieces. These are important when buying objects from the shop. To purchase

an object click on it with the right mouse button and if you can afford it you will be allowed to place it into your inventory.

Selling is similar, select the object you wish to sell with the left mouse button and left click on the shopkeeper. If he offers an acceptable price right click and you will be credited with the cash.

If you manage to run out of spells you may have to indulge in a little hand-to-hand combat. Clicking the left mouse button on the crossed swords activates hand combat, while clicking the right mouse button unleashes a flurry of the presently selected spell.

As you progress, your character's statistics will fall and you can recuperate them by resting. If you find a bed click the right mouse button over the bed and the party will go to sleep. The recovery rate will depend on the character's hunger levels.

The rest is up to you, but there is plenty more to discover by yourself. By the way, you can save your progress to RAM at any time just by pressing the R key.

There is a **Wiznotes.txt** text file that can be read which contains more information about the demo. To read it you should use the MS-DOS command Ed or Edit utilities.

*You will need 800k to play Wizard. If your EMS is disabled enable it with MemMaker (DOS 6.0 only)*

## minimum loading requirements

MINIMUM MEMORY 800k EMS	SOUND CARDS SoundBlaster, Adlib, Roland
MINIMUM PROCESSOR 386	MINIMUM GRAPHICS VGA
MINIMUM SPEED 25MHz	MINIMUM HARD DISK 2 MB
INSTALLATION Essential	CONTROLS Mouse, Keyboard

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PRICE	TBA	RELEASE DATE	TBA





# The Elder Scrolls ARENA



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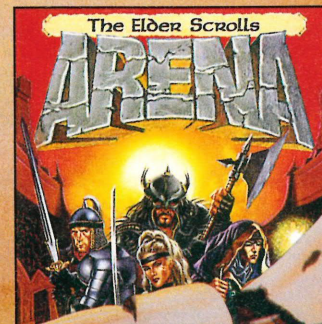
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# THE WORD

## Lest we forget

*Far Right (top):* Beautifully rendered animations greatly enhance the visual flair of the game

*Far Right (bottom):* With a first person perspective, you slowly approach one of many inside locations

As the new Hollywood inspired games industry continues to thrive - allegedly - and as interactive entertainment becomes a much over used and maligned buzzword, Electronic Arts have sprinted their way towards the front of the track when it comes to heaping development efforts onto all CD and multi-media type platforms.

There are still quite a few hurdles to leap though before that quintessential product manifests itself. But lest we forget, floppy disks have still not yet run out of puff; there's still a lot of mileage left in those legs.

Before they're unceremoniously consigned to the depths of dusky cupboards, they still have the potential to lay proof that excellent graphics combined with an involving story may still take players by storm.

Such a welcome addition to the game fraternity may well come in the shape of **Forgotten Castle**, subtitled *The Awakening*. US based Twin Dolphin is the driving force behind the game. The plot's mainframe follows that of the traditional fairy-tale type slosh.

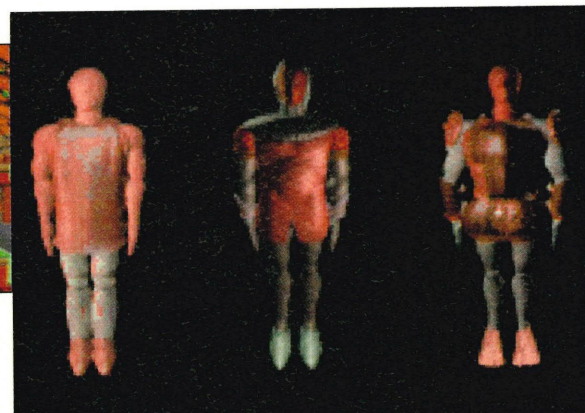
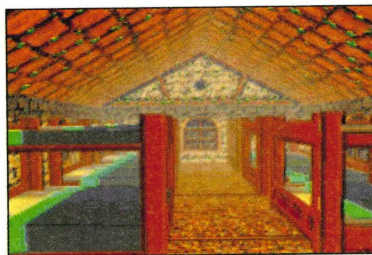
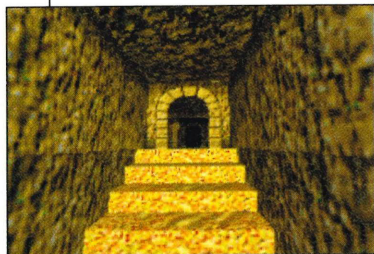
The founding prince Tris learns about the truth of his heritage on his mother's deathbed. His father, the true king, is missing and his rightful kingdom now governed by evil people.

Before Prince Tris can liberate his dependants and look upon the face of his father, he must undergo a series of missions. These will take him through city areas and underneath the castle, deep into the bowels of the dungeons, through to the doors of jails and through a myriad of labyrinths.

Billed as primarily a role-play adventure, needless to say *Forgotten Castle* relies on the hack 'n' slash formula as monster after evil monster falls upon the hapless lad. Meanwhile the combination of magic and combat systems will allow the player to immerse themselves right into the core of the game while the action orientated interface should assure that ease of play does in no way hinder fluidity of progress.

Nothing new here you may already be muttering, cynics that you are. But what makes this game so darned sexy is that: A: every single game level is lavishly rendered in 3D, even the furniture and items are polygons; B: the story doesn't restrict itself to linearity, thereby allowing the player to have the freedom to follow individual twists and turns according to his personal preferences and C: spectacular sound effects are boosted by a full cinematic score (again a movie related word creeps into the summary) to really give depth and a true sense of partaking in something real, a prerequisite of a top end of the range product.

*Forgotten Castle* is currently scheduled for a March time release from the Electronic Arts base.



## Licence to kill

A real humdinger of a beat'em-to-smithereens on all console formats, **Mortal Kombat** is set for a conversion to the PC, in fact following the very same route as its contemporary *Street Fighter 2*.

The latter, incidentally, suffered extremely badly in the changeover. Whether *Mortal Kombat* can still manage to retain

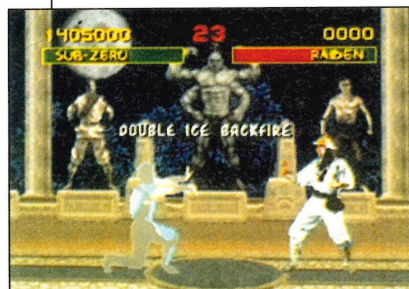
its speed and ferociousness is debatable. Whether a console orientated combat game can find a niche in the PC field is also questionable. Nevertheless, the deed is almost done, Probe Software being the capable team responsible for the task in hand.

Seven contestants are assembled to participate in a competition to the death in which complex combinations of kicks, punches and special moves are tested to the extreme.

The realism of the game characters is what has made it such a huge hit in arcades. Athletic actors and martial art experts have been filmed performing their moves before the footage is converted to the computer.

Goro, the four armed 2,000 year old supreme ruler, originally began life as a twelve inch plasticine model. With stop motion photography, every minute movement has been filmed frame by frame, emulating the Tony Hart and Morph kind of approach. The result is a master fighter with a frightening presence. Only when the other fighters have sorted out their differences can a confrontation with him be arranged.

*Mortal Kombat* is set to punch its way into the market soon. To be distributed by Virgin Interactive.



*Above:* Special moves play a prominent part in finishing off the opponent

*Right:* Choose one of seven martial art experts

*Do you prefer high action combat computer games?*

Would you welcome a forum in which to exchange a plenitude of ideas, notes and tips? If the answer to both is a resounding yes then maybe *The Combat Club* (official launch February 1 '94) could be just the salvation you've been searching for, if only you'd known.

A variation on an old theme, the club aims to entice gamers who relish hard-core combat as part of their gamesplaying pleasures into this little network. A magazine is hoped to be produced and, supported by trade shows, members will be entitled to enter high profile national games competitions.

Should you be interested in finding out more about this organisation, simply write to: *The Combat Club*, 19 Dankworth Road, Brighton Hill, Basingstoke, Hampshire RG22 4LJ. Tel: 0256 840639.



## Fodder for thought

*Far Right: A helicopter flies over the landscape before the ravages of war hits it*

*Below: The Amiga screenshots give some indication of what the finished PC version will turn out to be like*

War has never been so much fun. Hmm, controversial, maybe, but nevertheless an able advertising slogan. If it can stir up some brouhaha in the press, then so much the better. That equates to providing even more publicity.

The game which this slogan belongs to is none other than **Cannon Fodder**, now a stalwart of the Amiga base of thoroughly recommended games. It is being subjected to a few nips and tucks by Sensible Software in preparation for a grand entree into the PC arena.

The team that made its name with that acme of gaming addictions, Sensible Soccer, has now turned their wits to the theme of war. 'We've never really done violent games before,' remarks Jon Hare, co-founder of the company, 'and I'm only happy with this one because it makes you think, yes people do die.'

Here you control a team of squaddies (from a distance of course, rather than playing one of them. In that way you don't really mind as much about them being expendable).

In only the best of traditions, they put themselves in peril in a series of increasingly dangerous missions. These take on an overhead perspective which has now become a sort of trademark with Sensible Software. Just think back to Mega-Lo-Mania and even Sensible Soccer.

After being taken through several well adjusted training sessions, the action starts to sizzle with enemy killing, hostage kidnapping and the destruction of buildings.

To offset such Rambo-tastic gore, an oozing of glory may also be savoured with the option to rescue hostages and protect citizens, thereby incorporating a sizeable element of strategy and vigilance as well as maiming into the overall fun of the gaming package.

*Cannon Fodder is due to fire its gold tipped bullet come March, courtesy of Virgin Interactive.*



*'A good game is better than the machine. Concentration on technology underplays what we achieve'*

JON HARE, CO-FOUNDER OF SENSIBLE SOFTWARE

## Is it all over?

After such an abysmal show from the English football team on the World Cup front and the exit of one Mr Taylor, the national sport is looking a bit, well bleak, really. Never fear though, eager to spring out from the waiting wings is Virgin Interactive with an incredible sponsorship initiative.

Named 'The Virgin Games Schools Football Initiative', the proposal is to teach budding school children how to become skilled players and subsequently put the soccer world to rights. The government have agreed to match Virgin's input pound for pound via its Sportsmatch programme, while the football publication 'Shoot' and also Adidas are supporting the campaign, ensuring excellent all round publicity.

Paul Dowling, marketing manager for Virgin, is the first to admit the advantages of this. As he says, 'Not only does the scheme encourage kids to learn individual football skills, but it will also give Virgin direct access to around 25,000 UK schools.'

*Far Right: An overhead view is taken as the men advance in battle*

*Right: It is the meticulous attention to detail that will undoubtedly score many points for Cannon Fodder*



**Music and sound** FX can make an incredibly big difference in generating atmosphere and tension in games. To compliment an orchestrated symphony of melodies, multi-media speaker systems are now doing a roaring trade within the PC fraternity. TecnoPlus have recently released Power Sound and Power Sound 2, both with magnetic shielding protection and additional bass booster to enhance stereo sound which can be controlled from one speaker for maximum convenience. Battery or mains operated, recommended retail price is set at £19.99.

Also from TecnoPlus emerges the PC Sound System 2 bundle which incorporates an analogue joystick, Power Sound speakers, Voxkit voice utilities and a genuine Sound Blaster chipset from Creative Labs Inc. The pack has a price tag of just £119.99.





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**PC REVIEW** 8/10

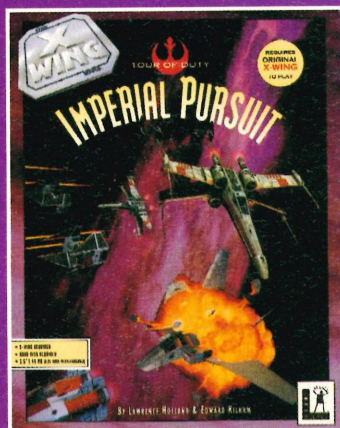
"Without question, X-Wing defines the current state of the art space based fight and flight simulation."

**PC ZONE** 88%

"...one of the most addictive games I've played..."

**PC FORMAT** 87%

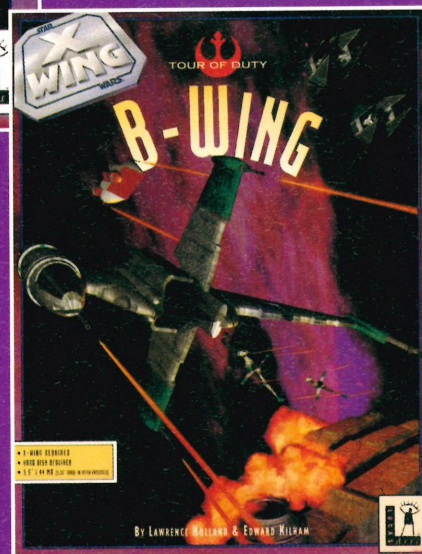
"It looks and plays great...it takes the space bound flight 'n' fight sim about as far as it can go."



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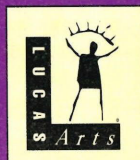
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**Top Far Right:** Breach 3 hones in on the military type scenario

## Game for anything

The UK's largest computer games store has just opened in Liverpool with 500 square feet of display catering for PC and console gamers alike. Says Neil Taylor, managing director of Game, 'We are not aiming purely at one age group. One of our early stores had corrugated iron around it, but we have toned that down now.'

In the Liverpool store, the walls are covered with large mirrors and designer graffiti and feature nearly 100 monitors, including a number of PCs for customers to try out games. Taylor sees this as an important part of Game's PC sales strategy. 'A PC game won't sell unless people get an idea of what it's about.'

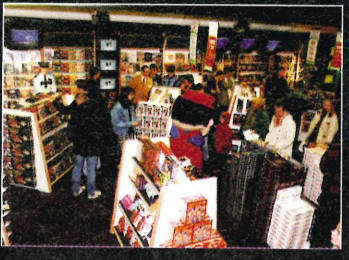


**Far Right:** Detroit takes the idea of car manufacturing and transposes it into a top of the range simulation game

**Right:** Neil Taylor, (Right) managing director of Game

Specialist staff will be on hand to advise customers on the wide range of products, which includes peripherals, books and magazines. 'Most people buy their PC from Dixons or PC World, but then they come here for their software,' says David Wilson, a buyer for Game. 'With games departments in music stores, the staff are primarily there because they like music whereas our staff are gamers.'

Three new stores in Liverpool, Nottingham and Norwich will be the largest in the UK. Game, the country's second biggest games retailer, is planning an explosion of stores over the next two years with a targeted 200 by 1995. 'In just three years, we've established Game as a leader in the market,' says Neil Taylor. 'We are expanding rapidly and trading profitably and are committed to making Game the UK's number one games retailer.'



## Making an Impression

A new strategy from Impressions; the people responsible for Air Bucks and the popular combat strategy game Breach 2

are branching out into education with a new range of games under the label Cambridge Interactive.

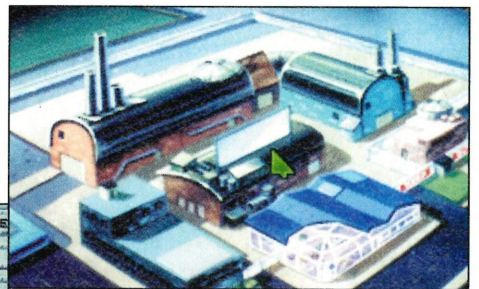
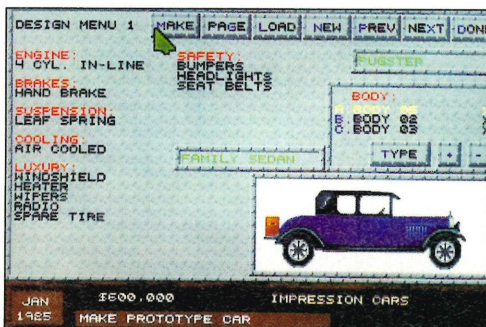
Meanwhile **Breach 3** aims to answer player's problems with the turn-based emphasis of its predecessor by adopting a non-stop arcade-style approach. The marines will act according to orders you have given them as part of your military campaign, with the option to stop the carnage mid-explosion and have a look at maps and reports. Each of the marines will have their own personality, with an interface similar to Rules of Engagement 2.

But building a strategy isn't only for military commanders. Leaders in industry also make far reaching decisions and now you can be the next Henry Ford or De Lorean. **Detroit** is the next step in car sims, and involves



designing your sports car, sedan or wagon, researching new technology and then building and marketing your product. You can even advertise your dream car in magazines or on the television.

*Breach 3 is scheduled to make its entrance in March and Detroit is due for a February launch.*



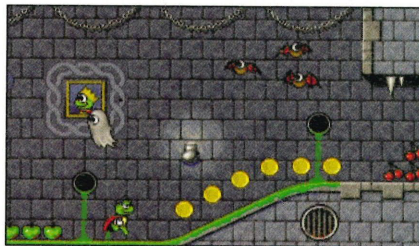
*'Once more unto the breach dear friends, once more; Or close the walls up with our English dead'*

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE, PLAYWRIGHT

## Romping home

The PC is a frail little creature when it comes to accommodating platform romps, but as it gains prominence as a valid games machine, competition between software publishers is moving from the distinctly non-existent to a middling luke warm. In a frenzy of sudden activity, console and Amiga games are being shoved, cajoled and squeezed onto the PC platform.

CodeMasters have their Excellent Dizzy wowing a potential captive audience later on in the year, Gremlin Graphic's Lital Divil is now doing the rounds showing some bare faced cheek in a delightful arcade game, and Millennium too are set to release their just born loveable anti-hero Pinkie. James Pond 3, underwater cop FiSH with a licence to gill brings up the rear in these releases and is due out for a springtime release. Team 17 are retaliating from their neck of the woods in



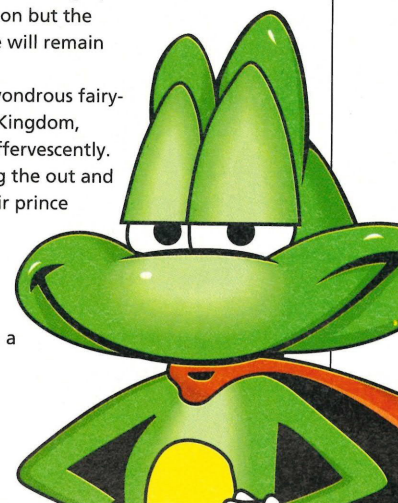
rural Yorkshire. Their raison d'être is called **Superfrog**, already a living green and sprightly legend among the Amiga user base. Of course the graphics will be superior on the PC version but the mainframe of the game will remain untampered with.

Action is set in the wondrous fairy-tale land of The Magic Kingdom, where the sun beams effervescently. The only person spoiling the out and

out fun and frivolity is a haggard old witch who's just kidnapped the fair prince and transformed him into a frog, now played by you.

The objective is to go get the girl in a no holds barred, not to mention well rounded romp around six platform levels. Each level contains four zones that all boast their own difficulty curvature. If the game proves to be as playable on the PC as it is on its sister Amiga, then a roaring treat may well be assured.

*Superfrog is down for a March release from Team 17.*





*What's hot and what's not in the PC gaming charts, on floppy and CD based formats, is a topic of much debate. PC Action now, courtesy of Gallup, gives you the pleasure of perusing the PC titles hitting the headlines this month. Along with this comes a complete update of the releases that are expected over the coming months...*

## Top 20 budget releases

1. Monkey Island	Kixx	£16.99
2. Xmas Lemmings	Psygnosis	£14.99
3. Wing Commander	Hit Squad	£14.99
4. Populous and Promised Lands	Hit Squad	£14.99
5. Links - The Challenge of Golf	Kixx	£16.99
6. Cruise for a Corpse	Kixx	£14.99
7. Fun school 2 Under 6	Hit Squad	£9.99
8. Lombard RAC Rally	Hit Squad	£9.99
9. Santa's Xmas Caper	Zeppelin	£9.99
10. Speed Ball 2	Kixx	£9.99
11. Championship Manager 94 Data Disk	Domark	£9.99
12. Fun School 2 6-8 Years	Hit Squad	£9.99
13. Magic Land Dizzy	Codemasters	£9.99
14. Indianapolis 500	Hit Squad	£14.99
15. Trivial Pursuit	Hit Squad	£12.99
16. Fantasy World Dizzy	Codemasters	£9.99
17. Leisure Suit Larry	Kixx	£14.99
18. Fun School 2 Over 8's	Hit Squad	£9.99
19. The Simpsons	Hit Squad	£9.99
20. Powermonger	Hit Squad	£14.99

## Top 20 Floppy charts

1. TFX	Ocean	£44.99
2. Frontier: Elite 2	Gametek	£39.99
3. Indy Car Racing	Virgin	£44.99
4. Network Q RAC Rally	Europress Software	£34.99
5. Microsoft Flight Simulator V.5	Microsoft	£39.99
6. Lemmings 2	Psygnosis	£39.99
7. Star Trek: Judgement Rites	Interplay	£44.99
8. Jurassic Park	Ocean	£34.99
9. Sensible Soccer 92/93	Renegade/Mindscape	£32.99
10. Sam and Max - Hit the Road	US Gold	£42.99
11. Premier Manager 2	Gremlin Graphics	£34.99
12. X-Wing	US Gold	£45.99
13. B-Wing	US Gold	£20.99
14. Subwar 2050	MicroProse	£44.99
15. Zool	Gremlin Graphics	£34.99
16. Streetfighter 2	US Gold	£29.99
17. Links 386 PRO	US Gold	£45.99
18. Syndicate: American Revolt	Electronic Arts	£19.99
19. Flight Sim 5: New York	Microsoft	£19.99
20. Premier Manager	Gremlin Graphics	£29.99

## Top 10 CD charts

1. Rebel Assault	US Gold	£45.99
2. Day of the Tentacle	US Gold	£45.99
3. Dracula Unleashed	Mindscape	£49.99
4. Return to Zork	Activision	£49.99
5. The Journeyman Project	Gametek	£39.99
6. Dune	Virgin	£49.99
7. Indiana Jones - Fate of Atlantis	US Gold	£45.99
8. The Lord of the Rings	Interplay	£44.99
9. The 7th Guest	Virgin	£69.99
10. Eye of the Beholder Trilogy	US Gold	£45.99

## CD release schedule

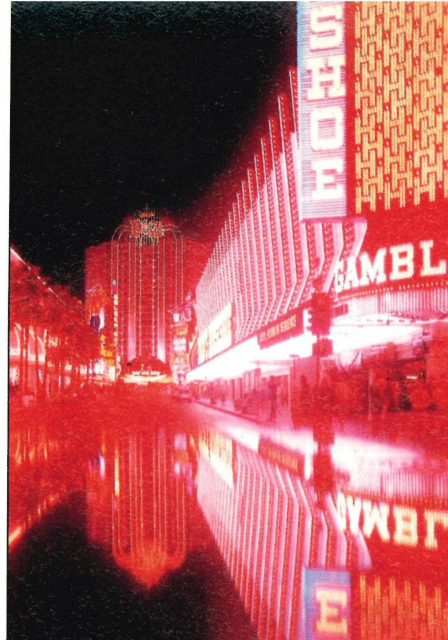
Advantage Tennis	Infogrames	Sports	Dec
Alone in the Dark	Infogrames	Adv	Dec
Shadow of The Comet	Infogrames	Adv	Dec
Mario Teaches Typing	Interplay	Educ	Early '94
Castle 2	Interplay	RPG	Early '94
Star Trek	Interplay	Adv	Nov
Bloodnet	MicroProse	RPG	Jan
Megarace	Mindscape	Driving	Feb
Dracula	Psygnosis	Horror	Apr
Lawnmower Man	Sales Curve	Action	Nov
Conspiracy	Virgin	Adv	Feb

## PC release schedule

Unnecessary Roughness	Accolade	Sports	Jan
Mechwarrior 2: The Clan	Activision	Action	Jan
Forgotten Castle	Electronic Arts	RPG	Mar
Pacific Strike	Electronic Arts	Simulation	Feb
Theme Park	Electronic Arts	Strategy	Mar
Syndicate	Electronic Arts	Action	Mar
Dreamweb	Empire	Adventure	Mar
7th Sword of Mendor	Grandslam	RPG	Jan
Reunion	Grandslam	Strategy	Feb
Alone in the Dark 2	Infogrames	Adventure	Jan
Dungeon Master 2	Interplay	RPG	June
Star Reach	Interplay	Strategy	Jan
Stonekeep	Interplay	Adventure	Mar
F-14 Fleet Defender	MicroProse	Simulation	Feb
Star Trek: TNG	MicroProse	Graphic Adv	Mar
Sim City 2000	Maxis	Strategy	Feb
Rise of the Robots	Mirage	Beat-'em-up	Feb
Wizard	Psygnosis	RPG	Jan
Last Action Hero	Psygnosis	Action	Feb
Magician's Castle	Psygnosis	Adv	Jan
The Chaos Engine	Renegade	Arcade	Jan
Police Quest IV	Sierra	Adv	Dec
Leisure Suit Larry IV	Sierra	Adv	Dec
Quest For Glory IV	Sierra	RPG	Dec
Aces of the Deep	Sierra	Simulation	Mar
Battledrome-Metal Tech	Sierra	Adv	Feb
Delta V	US Gold	Arcade/Sim	Dec
Dungeon Hack	US Gold	RPG	Dec
Evolution: Lost in Time	US Gold	Puzzle	Feb
Kyrandia 2	Virgin	RPG	Dec
Cannon Fodder	Virgin	Action	Mar



# show time



Above: Las Vegas, the city of gambling and home to this year's Winter Consumer Electronics Show

Las Vegas – a city lost in the Nevada desert, famed for its casinos, its wealth and its extraordinarily extravagant array of hotels. Such an aura of vivacity does it generate that people come far and wide to gamble, whether this be pocket money or life time hoardings, on the slot machines and roulette tables that clunk and click 24 hours a day, 52 weeks of the year.

It is into this Mecca of hopeful expectations that the computer industry comes every January. From the 6th-10th the city is taken over by exhibitors, consumers and reporters as the Winter Consumer Electronics Show (WCES) kicks into gear.

**Just as electronic** entertainment continues to soar, so too does the show grow in size, always encompassing a broader contingent of products every year. Represented with great aplomb is the PC, its peripherals, and, most importantly, its games software, both floppy and CD-Rom based.

Many products are exposed for the first time and the public can test out how playable they really are and whether they really live up to the expectations set by earlier screenshots and hyperboled new releases distributed to computer game journalists and distributors. But what has really stood

out from the crowd for the duration of the show, PC gameswise?

Well the most prominent licence has to be that of Star Trek. One of the most stunning games, although still undergoing a further 10 months in development, is Interplay's Star Trek: Starfleet Academy. Graphics are of a movie standard and early indications show that this Super VGA flight simulation has the potential to be very, very big.

**Also hoping to** cash in on the Trekkie fan base is MicroProse with their Star Trek: The Next Generation game due for an April release. Aided by Brent Spiner, who plays the part of Lt Commander Data in the TV series, it's looking to be a CD-Rom game quite capable of blasting the player into an unknown gaming arena where no man has gone before.

Another flight fast action game that's looking to be a stromer is Delta V. Destined for a first quarter release by US Gold in the UK, it's a wickedly fast shoot'em-up that boasts brightly colourful graphics. At the heart of this release is the simplicity of gameplay, taking us back to a basic shoot-and-be damned scenario that relies on sharp reflexes and seat of the pant sequences to home its addictive appeal.

As well as the primarily action orientated games, there also comes an

assortment of 'Civilisation in Space' type affairs. These include Outpost from the Sierra stable, Nomad from Gametek and Star Peach, courtesy of Interplay.

Outpost, taking a NASA theme, is certainly looking to be the best as regards graphics and depth of strategic gameplay but maybe there is a market for all three as PC gamers find room on their hard drives for controlling the colonisations of space.

Talking of colonisation, Sid Meier's sequel, in the loosest sense, to Civilisation concerns the settling of European and Asian communities in the US, the decision they had to make and the areas they had to cultivate. The game, unfortunately, is a long way off from completion.

**Many games are** being enhanced and shovelled onto CD and there really are no out and out surprises, but over the next six months the state of the PC games market would seem to be a solid one and one that will definitely grow. Next month PC Action will give you an extensive report on the ins and outs, ups and downs of the WCES with previews of what to look forward to.

Early estimates are that over 100,000 people passed through the doors of the Convention Centre in Las Vegas. PC Action, offering the best in PC entertainment is set to take you through these doors. Can you afford to miss it?

## MINI SURVEY

Since we ran our recent readers survey in the first issue of PC Action, many more PC games titles have been launched. Here's a quick questionnaire so you can tell us how you rate PC Action alongside the opposition.

Please write in the boxes the titles of any other PC games playing magazines you have read, then mark PC Action & the other titles on a scale of 1 to 10 for each category (10 being the highest and 1 the lowest).

name \_\_\_\_\_ address \_\_\_\_\_

title of magazine	page design	cover design	overall content	writing style	cover disks	overall package
PC Action	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
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Please return this mini survey to PC Action, Europa House, Adlington Park, Macclesfield SK10 4NP. All names will be put into a draw and the winner will receive a free PC game.



# DON'T BE Alone in the Dark

As Infogrames prepare to launch their eagerly awaited sequel to the adventure classic *Alone in the Dark*, we are offering you the chance to bathe in the lights of London's theatreland and strut your stuff wearing an exclusive *Alone in the Dark* jacket. Not only will the winner and one guest be staying at one of London's top hotels and dining in style at its restaurant, but they'll also be whisked off to see a fantastic West End show. However if you are not lucky enough to win this wonderful prize, we are also giving away 10 runners up prizes of *Alone in the Dark* on CD or floppy disk and 10 packs of *Alone in the Dark* playing cards.

## A night to remember

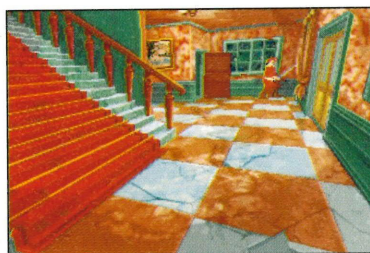
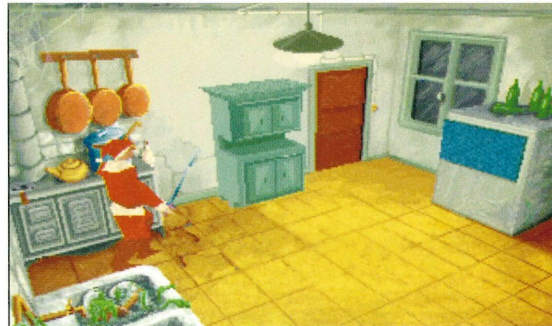
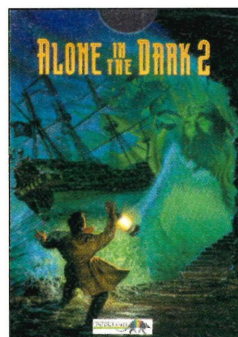
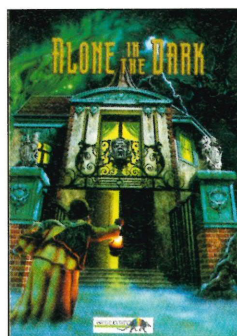
We've picked three of the most popular musicals around at the moment for you to choose from; that's the French revolution classic *Les Miserables*, Madame Butterfly-style love story *Miss Saigon* or Andrew Lloyd Webber's roller-skating extravaganza *Starlight Express*.

All travel will be paid for and you'll stay at St James Hotel in Westminster, a splendid Edwardian building that puts central London right on your doorstep. Dinner for two at the hotel restaurant, one of London's finest, will be included in your night out. And make sure you are wearing that exclusive *Alone in the Dark* jacket which is also part of the prize.

## That difficult second offering

The sequel to the revolutionary adventuring classic follows the same hero. The game itself is four times larger but the interface is just as accessible with fine polygon rendering and 3D style presentation, a rare visual treat. For those who like a challenge, the difficulty level is quite something – it's guaranteed to have you glued to the screen for hours, exploring the huge mansion and venturing out into the grounds and the garden maze. Better not reveal any more.....

Alone in the Dark playing cards



Just answer the questions below and then fill in the coupon and return it to us. Entrants and accompanying guests must be 18 years old or over. If you need help answering the questions, turn to our in-depth review on page 30.

Name the hero in AITD1 & 2

What is his occupation?

What is his objective in AITD2?

Name:

Address:

Postcode:

Age:

Send this entry form to: Alone in the Dark Competition, PC Action, Europa House, Adlington Park, Macclesfield, SK10 4NP. All entries should reach us no later than March 5. Employees of Europress may not enter this competition. Neither can their families. The editor's decision is final and no correspondence can be entered into.



# WORD INSIDE WORD

*No longer are major Hollywood players committing themselves to a sole brand of entertainment. The computer game as an art form has never looked more appealing...*

*Right: Sketches by Dave Gibbons*  
*Far right: Clive Barker, the British Stephen King has made a name for himself from producing low-budget, highly-entertaining horror movies such as Hellraiser*

**a**s games become more widespread and prominent in society, it comes as no surprise that artists from other domains of creative expression – comic book writers, graphic artists, authors, ex-Hollywood producers – are jumping on the gravy train.

Of course from the marketing point of view too, affiliation with a recognised talent can only assist publishing houses in the promotion of their wares.

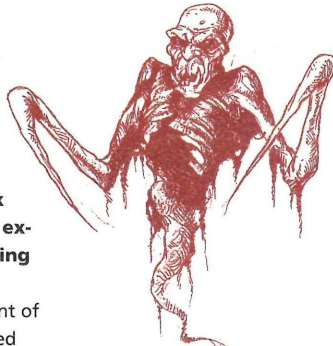
Cyberdreams, a company that specializes in serious science-fiction games has made it an unspoken rule to bring world famous artists, designers and writers into projects, well before drawing on in-house programmers and artists to expand on their ideas.

Typical of this development is Syd Mead (design credits include Blade Runner and Star Trek: The Motion Picture) whose involvement with CyberRace, a futuristic racing game released in October '93, began early in the conceptual development phase. The racing sleds, the mainstay of the game's visuals are produced by him, as are backgrounds and even the game's packaging.

**Gary Gygax, creator** of Advanced Dungeons and Dragons and best selling fantasy author, has also offered a wealth of talents to the company.

HR Giger, father of the acclaimed Alien picture has been involved in Dark Seed and is now collaborating with the team on Dark Seed 2, due for release in the last quarter of this year.

And, not to be neglected, Harlan Ellison, one of the world's most awarded fantasy writers has dipped his toes into the waters invested with pixel perfect images and rendered backdrops. The adaptation of his story, I Have No Mouth and I Must Scream, is scheduled for a late '94 release.



**WORD**  
Smaller companies, regardless of how good their games are, just won't have the financial

means with which to compete. Bearing this in mind, Accolade have also taken the approach of raising awareness of their products by releasing games in conjunction with a well known sports organisation (NFLPA), person (Charles Barkley, the National Basketball Association's most valuable player of '93) and author (Anthony Piers).

Piers' series of Xanth novels has been chugging along for 15 years now with sales of over seven million copies. The first Xanth computer game, Companions of Xanth, has just seen a release from Accolade.

Here the player is invited to explore Piers' world of mystical wonders peopled with elves, ogres, demons and, of course, the obligatory princess and villainous dragon.

The game follows the plot of the Demons Don't Dream book which has, since its release in early '93, sold 65,000 hardback copies. The game, distributed in December '93 hopes to emulate this success.

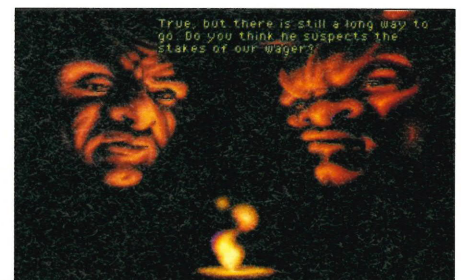
Even Clive Barker, British horror fiction writer, creator of the legendary Hellraiser and Nightbreed and subsequent film director for these two tales as well as Candyman, has relinquished himself to the stylish world of the computer game with the signing of a long term deal with Virgin Interactive.



It is the CD platform that Barker will most lean on. The extent of his involvement throughout the whole game process has yet to be finalized (don't expect to see Barker related products until late '94 at the earliest). It is expected that he will be involved through storyboarding and scripting stages, combining his well aligned narrative skills and character creation with technological experts.

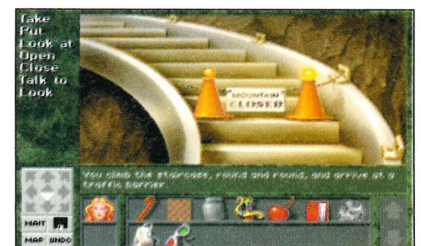
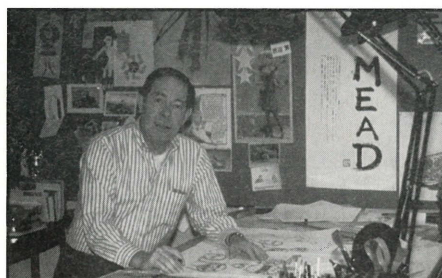
'We have always believed in investing heavily in talent,' says Virgin's Tim Chaney, 'and with Clive I think we have made a very sound judgment. He is enormously respected as a novelist and a director – with good reason, and he shows no signs of letting up.'

**Terry Pratchett too** has been plucked from the sphere of written fantasy and signed up by Psygnosis. Development company Teeny Weeny Games badgered and cajoled the author who has made a trademark out of poking fun at the genre commonly known as Dungeons and Dragons, until he relented, and



*Right: Syd Mead, the man responsible for the futuristic visuals of Blade Runner*

*Far Right: The Xanth computer game is based upon the Anthony Piers' novel initially set in Xanth*





# INSIDEWORD

*Right: Terry Pratchett, author of the Discworld novels has been signed up by Liverpool-based software giants, Psygnosis*

he has now literally joined creative forces with the team to help mould a PC adventure based game.

Revered for his Discworld novels, which take us to a unique and highly personal mythological world, Pratchett is now fully committed to launching such a tour de force into the land of computer generated fiction. Results should be seen towards late summer.

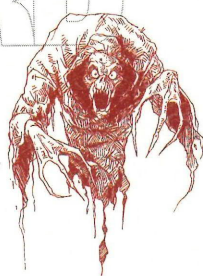
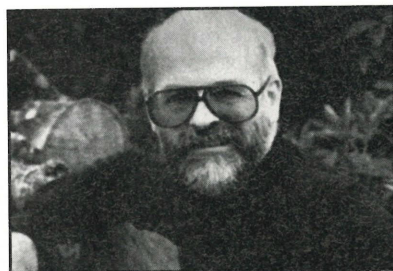
For those already involved, the rewards have been great. Graphic artist Dave Gibbons, famed for the critically acclaimed Watchmen graphic comics, is surely now reaping the benefits of his artistic liaison with Hull based Revolution Software. A year was spent designing their recently released Beneath a Steel Sky before any programming was carried out.

Revolution director Charles Cecil is adamant that Dave Gibbons taught the team a lot during that time: 'We believed that combining our skills could produce something really special, something groundbreaking – and it has. The game incorporates techniques and gameplay design that no one has done before.'

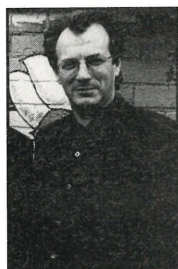
We're not trying to create reality. We're creating a specific style.' Dave Gibbons himself adds: 'I'm always interested in telling stories in words and pictures. It seems to be a very logical evolution of storytelling.'

If this is the way things are to go, these people are not so much gambling as securing their creative ability and stamping their own particular brand of originality on a new art form, the youngest of them all, and now a major player in the field of home entertainment.

SHARON GREAVES



*Right: Even Dave Gibbons, ex 2000AD artist and designer of the Watchmen, has entered into the world of the home computer*



*Right: CyberRace, a futuristic journey in which the talents of many artists, programmers and musicians have been perfectly blended together*



# GOLDEN 7



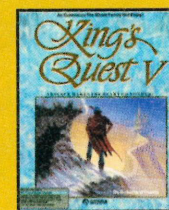
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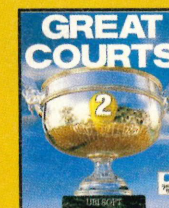
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FACADE? JASON  
SPILLER LOOKS  
A BIT DEEPER



**NAME:** Sid Meier

**PROFESSION:** Game designer and certified gamesplayer

**GAMES PORTFOLIO:** F-15 Strike Eagle, Railroad Tycoon, Silent Service, Red Storm Rising, Civilization

**I**would have made a terrible accountant and an even worse doctor. Designing games is a wonderful way to make a living... it's rare that someone can build a career on something they genuinely enjoy doing... you're looking at a very contented man.' Sid Meier's career spans 10 years and as many games, which count as some of the most popular and significant titles in game design history.

**'GAME DESIGN HAD UNDERESTIMATED THE INTELLIGENCE AND ASPIRATIONS OF THE GAMESPLAYERS'**

They range from the destructive war-mongering of F-15 Strike Eagle and F-19, to the creative world balancer Civilization. Also from the pioneering American dream maker Railroad Tycoon, to the murky fathoms of Silent Service and Red Storm Rising, Meier's contribution to progress in game design is exemplary. The diversity of themes and the depth of the games is inspirational.

Having notched up more benchmarks than a short-sighted carpenter, certified gamesplayer and game design supremo Sid Meier ardently contests that marathon sessions of self-imposed isolation with only a computer as company are nothing more than a normal and legitimate way for a grown man to make a living. But what makes one of the industry's most revered designers tick?

**A decade ago, Meier impulsively dropped** all academic and conventional career aspirations for a sudden interest in computer games. 'I recognised a limitless potential, he said. Some friends and I had bought the early machines - Atari 800 and a Commodore 64 - and I began fooling around with the basic off the shelf design packages. At that time games amounted to little more than alien annihilators, but I had the idea that an action game with a realistic simulation theme could be great.' Meier introduced F-15 and Strike Eagle at the same time as a number of air-simulations were being developed. Strike Eagle emerged as being more technically advanced and more playable. The game was massive and just kept on selling, while F15 became the flight simulation against which all were compared for many years to come.

**Publishers MicroProse switched onto** Meier's wavelength, setting a course for realistic simulation. It is likely that Meier inspired their self-styled 'seriously fun software' motto, while he instinctively pursued a line of investigation. Having ruled the air, he plunged manfully into the briny. 'I had always been fascinated by submarines and so first Silent Service and later, Red Storm Rising were labours of love. That's one great thing about game design, if a designer is lucky he can fulfil his dreams and aspirations. I'd love to work in movies, although that would sacrifice the luxury of being able to dream an idea and implement it in the morning without confrontation. Game design can be a very intensely personal vocation, but it suits me... I'm not

sure I could work with dozens of people on a movie project.'

After the success of F15 and Silent Service a number of things became patently obvious to Meier which shaped the ensuing stages of his career. 'Game design had underestimated the intelligence and aspirations of the gamesplayers to the point of patronization and seriously underplayed the power and potential of the machines

available to them.' Meier stuck by the conviction that the best way he could serve game design was by developing games based on subjects that he was interested in and MicroProse were only too willing to allow his self-indulgence.

**Meier puts his success down to** a determination to develop games that I as a gamesplayer would want to play... and no compromises. 'By concentrating on topics I'm interested in and designing the game from the perspective of a player, I think this results in a greater degree of honesty. I feel I'm sensitive to the needs of gamesplayers. To me a game is not something to lean back and admire the graphics. A game must be fun of course but it must also have important objectives and plenty of scope for variety.'

Meier having shelved all ideas military and confessing to 'never having anything more than a mild intrigue in space', set his sights on human matters. He explains 'As often happens in game design, a number of designers come up with the same ideas completely independently. I was working on plans for Civilization at the same time as Bullfrog were producing Populous and Graftgold were designing Mega-lo-mania. What is incredible is that although all of these games are generally the same genre, there are countless different elements and angles to the theme and so the games are so different.'

**Civilization is wonderfully enticing.** The game begins in 4000 BC and the objective is to develop an entire civilization from a small nomadic tribe. As the original tribe grows, small groups can be sent out to seek new people, territories and trades. Civilization develops into a masterful game, full of entertainment and long-term potential, while success depends on balancing the issues of economy, politics and defence.

Civilization is such a constructive format in an arena which is intrinsically violent and destructive. Yet when pushed on the subject of violence Meier's response is noticeably guarded, 'I've done some military games. I think simulation of military vehicles is relevant. A lot of people are very unlikely to ever pilot a military jet or submarine. Simulation is therefore an incredible substitute which is both educational and fun.

It's difficult to pontificate about this issue without sounding self-

righteous. I think there is a great deal of responsibility in the role violence plays in game design as well as in movies and TV. But I think there is a natural human instinct for violence and destruction which is suppressed and restrained by the laws of civilized society. If you watch children, a dad will build a tower with building blocks and a child will enjoy smashing it down, until eventually the child learns that building the blocks is more fun and rewarding than destroying them. ■■■■■

**'AS A GAMESPLAYER I'M LIKE THE KID THAT KNOCKS THE BUILDING BLOCKS DOWN AND DISCOVERS THAT BUILDING THEM BACK UP IS MORE FUN'**





# In a bla





# ze of glory

**Inferno, from Ocean Software looks**  
**From TFX to a fantasy**  
**set to be a big hit this year. But**  
**space game called**  
**producing such a complex game**  
**Inferno, D.I.D are**  
**requires a large, devoted posse of**  
**taking technology**  
**developers and a sales and**  
**beyond the limits**  
**marketing team that knows the score**

**b**uying a computer game is, we're sure you'll all agree, a fairly simple task. You read the review, you check out the promotional material and then you visit your local software dealer in the hope of making a worthwhile purchase. Then you sit in the comfort of your home playing it until the next big release catches your eye.

With the process of purchasing software so simple, it is very easy to forget just how many people are involved in the entire process of producing a game, especially when that game happens to be the much awaited sequel to Epic.

Inferno from D.I.D (Digital Image Design) is to be distributed through Ocean Software and promises to be one of the most exciting releases of

1994. Inferno utilises the same 3D engine that has made TFX such a massive success but D.I.D have considerably improved it since the short development time between the two products. Billed as the ultimate space game, Inferno features some of the most silky smooth graphics ever seen on the PC, including spectacular animation that binds the many differing plots together.

D.I.D are keen to stress that although Inferno is the sequel to Epic it will feature far superior graphics and sound, plus a world several times larger than its predecessor. They have been given more time to finish the game, something that didn't happen during the development of Epic and which resulted in bugs going un-checked. But just what does it take to actually produce and ▶



**Above:** Inferno utilises the same 3D engine that drove TFX and looks to be the fastest, smoothest engine seen to date on the PC



# In a blaze of glory

► market a game as large as this? Well, besides the actual quality of the ensemble there needs to be a competent marketing and sales group assigned to it. There is also a multitude of other departments that are dedicated to ensuring that the product is an instant success and sells well.

Ocean have been in the software industry long enough to know that aggressive marketing and promotion, along with good quality software, can make the difference between

100,000 units sold and only 20,000.

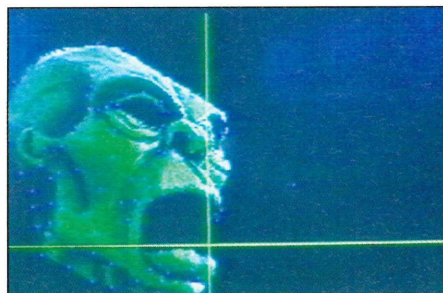
The most important element when releasing games is to initially have a good product that fills a niche in the market. Anticipating this can be difficult as development times are now being extended as technology improves.

Sean Hollywood, art and design director at D.I.D and the man mostly responsible for the superb visuals in *Inferno*, realises that to create a good game requires intensive planning and preliminary design work.

'D.I.D approached Ocean for TFX and *Inferno* and they were very keen. Obviously we had to have a brainstorming session first where everyone got the opportunity to put forward their ideas. We then put them into a melting pot as such and storyboarded them.'

However, *Inferno* has required a great deal more planning than this, especially due to its graphic complexity. The idea behind it is extremely advanced, but would the technology be able to handle what was required?

Sean continues, 'In terms of *Inferno*, development was first started to see if we could logistically do what we wanted to. We thought of some new design and graphical techniques that we would all like to incorporate into the whole package as well as 3D techniques for the in-game stuff. When the feasibility for such an idea had been



**Above:** D.I.D have used real sculptured models for their characters in the *Inferno* world. The models are digitized and then animated using a simple point and drag interface. The animations are linked together via a neat flow chart program

researched only then could we go ahead.

'We develop on a number of multiple fronts. The design will go on in tandem with the technology as well as the artwork. Nothing is done in isolation because we work very much as a team.'

Ocean have kept a constant eye on the development of *Inferno*, looking out for visually impressive areas in the game that can be best used for marketing. It is very important that the retailer be convinced of the product if it is to secure itself a respected place on the shelves in the shops. Gary Bracey, Ocean Software's director is convinced of the technological advances made in *Inferno* and has no doubt that it will do well when released to the public.

'This kind of technology doesn't just appear, it's refined over a period of years. D.I.D have been working on their 3D engine for as long as I have known them, which is five years. It is an extremely specialist area and requires many years experience.'

The 3D engine that Gary Bracey refers to is certainly one of the best we have seen so far on the PC. But it is a well known fact that pretty pictures do not necessarily make for a



**Above left:** Regularly, the D.I.D team get together around the table to discuss the latest progress. At this point they can also throw in ideas on how they can improve the games they are presently developing. Everyone has a say in what goes on and at each stage of the project they frequently meet and throw new ideas into the developing arena



good release. With graphic technology superseding all other elements that make up a game, playability often seems to have taken a back seat. Ocean's Gary Bracey realises that the two compliment each other as explained below.

'What they (D.I.D) have done is to bring this 3D technology in with some very creative ideas and have brought forth something which is pretty unique – something that is technologically innovative but at the same time compelling to play. Very rarely are these two elements combined. We feel we've

**Below and above right:** Who better to create an *Inferno* comic than Judge Dredd artist, Sean Phillips? Sean was asked to create a comic instruction manual that would introduce the players to the characters within the game. Could this be the start of a new Ocean policy regarding the value of packaging content?



**THE COMIC IS PART OF THE INSTRUCTION MANUAL – A KIND OF INTRODUCTION TO THE CHARACTERS AND THE WORLD THEY INHABIT. THE CHARACTERS ARE SCIENCE FICTION CLICHES. YOU'VE GOT A HUMAN, BLOND HAired HERO AND UGLY, EVIL ALIENS**



This is the hero of *Inferno* who is controlled throughout the game. He is seen here using the Retina scan equipment

SEAN PHILLIPS, JUDGE DREDD ILLUSTRATOR



# THE MUSIC HAD TO BE A BIT MORE OPEN AND AMBIENT - ENOUGH TO CREATE THE ATMOSPHERE OF INFERNO



NICK FIEND, ALIEN SEX FIEND



**Above:** The chart shows a break down of the many marketing communication disciplines Ocean will have mixed together to market Inferno. It also highlights how they equally ensure that both retailers and consumers are addressed

brought both of these elements together and thrown a few others in the pot just for good measure, such as the music. All in all, we feel we've got a pretty unique package.'

Ocean commissioned Nick and Mrs. Fiend of Alien Sex Fiend fame to write the music for the CD-Rom version of the game that would bring the world of Inferno to life. At first, the prospect of composing a score for Inferno seemed a fairly daunting task as explained by Mrs. Fiend.

'We had a phone call from the record company to say that they'd had a message from Cocks Randle Link asking if we would be interested in doing music for a computer game soundtrack. We said okay, we'll talk about it. So, we had a further chat with Cocks Randle Link, a meeting and more questions regarding how it was going to be done, exactly what it was they wanted. Did they want Alien Sex Fiend the band or did they just want Nick and myself to do it? Were there to be any vocals and will it be done in a recording studio?'

Once the Fiends and Ocean had come together and talked about the musical score, they set about writing it along with Barry

Leitch, Ocean's in-house musician who has written the music for more than 80 games, including TFX.

Alien Sex Fiend have released eleven successful albums over the past decade and have a very large and loyal international following. So to make sure they produced the right sounds they installed themselves in Ocean's development studios in Manchester for five weeks.

Combining the talents of live musicians with that of computer musicians was not an easy task. Barry Leitch discovered that his previous, creative routine was about to be changed.

'Usually I get asked to write a piece of music and it's only got to please myself and the guy who's designing the game. But here I've had three extra heads saying No! No! Take out that guitar and put this one in. It drives you mad!'

Nick Fiend also found it a considerable change writing the music for Inferno. He sums up his feelings by comparing the process with that of creating an album.

'You get the same result - five weeks of differing moods. Although I'm not that musical I do know what I like, so it's relatively the same

## The Odyssey Begins

Inferno looks set to be the biggest space fantasy game of 1994 and could well become a PC classic. A typical story of humans V aliens, the game - a massive space war theme with impressive 3D graphics - takes us around beautifully scrolling landscapes throughout a total of seven planets and their accompanying moons. All these can be visited in your spacecraft with an almost seamless transition between space and the many structures that litter the planets found in the Inferno universe. Inbetween the intense action of space combat you can sit back and watch the Inferno story unfold with incredible animations and characters that can actually talk. When PC Action paid the company a visit in Runcorn, D.I.D produced a demo that takes the player from the outer reaches of space all the way into a moonbase structure as smoothly as if we were actually there. Once in the moonbase, we are taken through its many corridors blasting spacecraft and structures into oblivion. But the most spectacular part of the demo is the tiny men. When zoomed into, these tiny black specks evolve into incredible, 3D rendered characters with full facial expressions - a true experience in virtual reality. Inferno is now to hit a late spring '94 release, in an expected blaze of glory.

process except I haven't been able to mix it or put a guitar on it. All I could really do was direct which is very frustrating.'

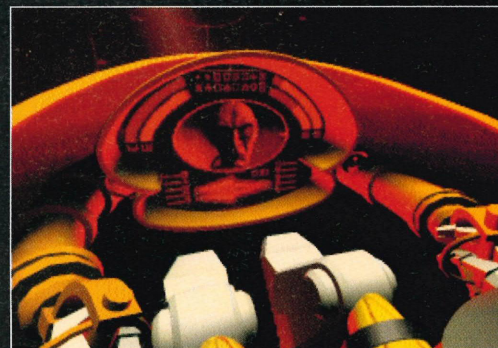
The music has a very ambient mood. It's atmospheric and changes in conjunction with what's happening in the game. Nick and



D.I.D have dedicated over 60,000 man hours to creating the most advanced space game ever



The animation scenes are pegged together in a flow chart system designed by D.I.D for their games



Much of the animation takes on a very cinematic style with zoom views and close-ups to enhance the atmosphere



# In a blaze of glory

► Mrs. Fiend are extremely happy with the result, and while it's been hard at times, the result certainly justifies their frustration. Nick is especially pleased and sums up its purpose in the game.

'The music had to be a bit more open and ambient – enough to create the atmosphere of Inferno.'

One area which Ocean are paying special attention to is the packaging content. How many times have you bought a game in a huge box only to find three disks and a leaflet-sized manual inside? Ocean want to address this problem by producing top quality manuals as well as extra goodies to go inside the package on the shelves.

Inferno features a comic which introduces the player to the characters within the game. Who better to write and draw an Inferno comic than renowned Judge Dredd artist, Sean Phillips.

'The comic is part of the instruction manual – a kind of introduction to the characters and the world they inhabit. We sat down and decided that what we wanted to concentrate

on was the human interaction, or the interaction between the humans and aliens which isn't part of the game but is something we were able to do extremely well in the comic.'

Producing such a comic requires fairly close involvement with the game itself. It can only serve as an introduction as the player effectively chooses his or her own destiny by playing the game.

Sean continues, 'The characters are science fiction clichés. You've got a human, blond haired hero and you've got your ugly, evil aliens. The characters can't die at the end. We've got to make sure they finish in the comic as they start in the game. If we killed the characters off there wouldn't be any game to play.'

While work continues perfecting Inferno, Ocean's sales and marketing team are busy making sure that the product receives maximum coverage. Simon Alty, marketing manager at Ocean is responsible for obtaining coverage for Inferno. He must create as much awareness of the product as possible so that the sales team can sell off the initial response.

'The secret to successful marketing of a computer game is to firstly ensure you have a top quality, leading edge product. Secondly,



**Above:** The takeoff sequence is stunning. Static screenshots such as these can never do justice to the real thing

identify the core market for the product and then through a subtle combination of PR and advertising ensure that the entire target audience is reached.'

Much of the PR revolves around computer magazines such as PC Action. While Inferno is still in development the marketing team will issue previews for magazines followed by reviews and competitions. More and more software companies are now allowing magazine publishers to write about the programmers and development of their games as this is also considered worthy promotion for the product in question.

Approximately three months prior to the release of Inferno, Simon Alty and his marketing team got together and develop their marketing plan. At this time a budget is also produced so that the team know how much they can spend, when and where.

Before any adverts could be placed, an Inferno logo is created. It is important to get this right first time as it will serve as the icon by which Inferno will be known while the game is still in development. As well as graphics and a logo, copy is also written to create public awareness of the Inferno world.

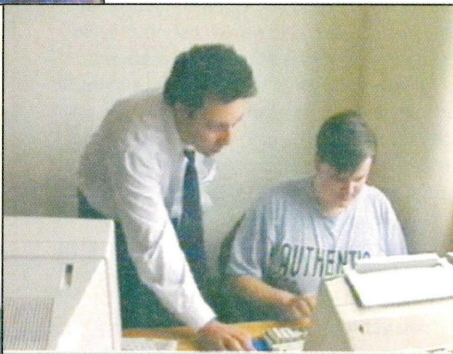
As you can see, the three months promotional campaign can decide the fate of a product. But what happens when the game hits the shelves. How does the marketing team make sure that the initial hype continues?

'Having reached the consumer, we must then ensure that the messages of high review scores, massive press coverage and the promise through the imagery that we have created a whole new experience in interactive entertainment empower the consumer to buy the product and ultimately recommend it to their friends. Easy, really,' says Simon.

With the marketing plan up and running, the sales team, headed by Ocean's UK sales



**Left/Below left:** Alien Sex Fiend were commissioned by Ocean to write the music for the CD-Rom version of Inferno. Nick and Mrs. Fiend were both sceptical about writing for home computers but the development of the Inferno score was, surprisingly, very similar to creating an album. **Below:** Barry Leitch, Ocean's in-house musician found it very interesting to work with a live music band but also difficult when he had to get his written piece passed



Sean Hollywood, who previously worked in television, is the man responsible for most of the graphic style of Inferno

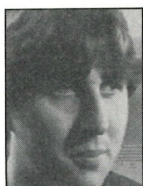


The guy that you play is a human. His mission is to fight against the evil aliens



The models were made by hand and then animated using D.I.D's own animation tools





# INFERNO, IN MY EYES, IS WHERE EPIC LEFT OFF. THERE WERE SO MANY THINGS WE WANTED TO DO WITH EPIC BUT WE JUST RAN OUT OF TIME. WE NOW HAVE A SECOND BITE AT THE CHERRY, AS IT WERE, WITH INFERNO AND WE'RE HOPING IT WILL BE THE DEFINITIVE SPACE GAME

MARTIN KENRIGHT, MANAGING DIRECTOR D.I.D.

manager Ian Richardson, are then able to begin selling the game to distributors and ultimately the retailers.

Fortunately for Ian Richardson, D.I.D. had produced some very impressive demos early on so promoting Inferno to the retailers has not really been a problem. A development video has also been produced, narrated by Violet Berlin of Bad Influence fame, which cost £20,000, an indication of the seriousness with which Ocean are taking Inferno.

The distributors, such as CentreSoft and LeisureSoft order stock from Ocean depending on the requirements of the retailers. Stock re-orders soon after the release of the product are considered to be a good omen predicting high sales figures. First day sales are the most important and Ocean expect Inferno to do really well.

Jurassic Park, Ocean's recent movie licence sold 77,000 units on the first day and Christmas sales should have reached 100,000. A movie licence will invariably sell more units than an original concept but Inferno is expected to sell 30,000 on the first day and ultimately reach the 50,000 mark.

If any stock is not sold it is returned to Ocean due to a returns agreement between the two companies concerned. The stock is then sent to the warehouse where it can be distributed elsewhere if necessary.

With both marketing and sales plans going full steam ahead, the in-house testing department at Ocean will be hammering Inferno to death in order to expose glitches and bugs. Epic and F-29 Retaliator, both from D.I.D. contained various bugs which couldn't be

eradicated in time. Obviously, D.I.D. and Ocean do not want a repeat performance.

Gary Bracey praises the testers at Ocean and agrees that it is the most important aspect of development prior to a game's release.

'We have our own in-house testing department here which employs about 20 people who live to play games. They will be given Inferno and expected to play it to the end. What we normally do is have two people who enjoy playing this type of game and two people who don't necessarily like it, just to see how much this genre can overlap and bridge the gap between someone who wouldn't traditionally play this kind of game and someone who would. We want it to appeal more generically.'

'We will introduce Inferno to these four testers and we will then illicit their feedback as to how challenging it is, how desirable it is and whether it appeals to them on a presentation basis as well.'

Many people believe that testers have a great job, being paid for simply playing games all day long. As more and more is revealed behind the scenes of software development it is becoming apparent that the games testers' so called cushy little number can prove to be a nightmare. Gary Bracey more than understands the plight of these unfortunate souls.

'We will have our complete testing department playing Inferno through from start to finish, throwing the joysticks against the wall, pressing all the keys on the keyboard - anything to make the game crash or lock-up. We want to make sure that what goes out onto the streets is as flawless as possible.'

Because Inferno is so huge there are obviously many derivatives of actions that can be taken and it is virtually impossible to cover every one.

'All those people who think that games testers have it easy and that it's a dream job are mistaken. It can be very repetitive and tiresome. They do a very good job and have to keep their wits about them all the time. A lot of pressure is put upon them because the game could potentially stand or fall depending on what they discover.'

With the bug-testing finally over, Inferno will be released to an appreciative audience at which point Ocean can then begin to monitor their success or failures. It is rare that such a classy product should be promoted so vividly and so thoroughly. But Ocean and D.I.D., understandably do not want to waste what is potentially ground breaking as far as technological achievement is concerned. Being realistic, there is no way that it could fail!

At long last, Martin Kenwright, D.I.D.'s managing director can fulfil his ambition of being part of the ultimate space fantasy game.

STEVE WHITE

UNAI



## THIS KIND OF TECHNOLOGY DOESN'T JUST

## APPEAR, IT'S REFINED OVER A PERIOD OF YEARS. IT IS AN EXTREMELY SPECIALIST AREA AND REQUIRES MANY YEARS OF EXPERIENCE



A myriad of different facial expressions can be created using the 3D technology in order to give the characters personality



Characters are moved by picking certain points that surrounded them and then pulling them in different directions

GARY BRACEY, OCEAN SOFTWARE DIRECTOR



# BENCHTEST

*This is the section* of PC Action that draws you into an in-depth analysis of all the latest, and the best, PC software offerings entering the market around this festive time of the year. All genres, from role-playing forays right through to arcade-style adventures, are catered for to give you a complete guide.

*Top drawer graphics* may push a game to a higher echelon but it's gameplay that really counts.

We therefore give an overall score for the games, taking into account the feel of them.

*A game awarded 90% or over is obviously a must buy while those in the 70/80% bracket are also well worth looking at.*

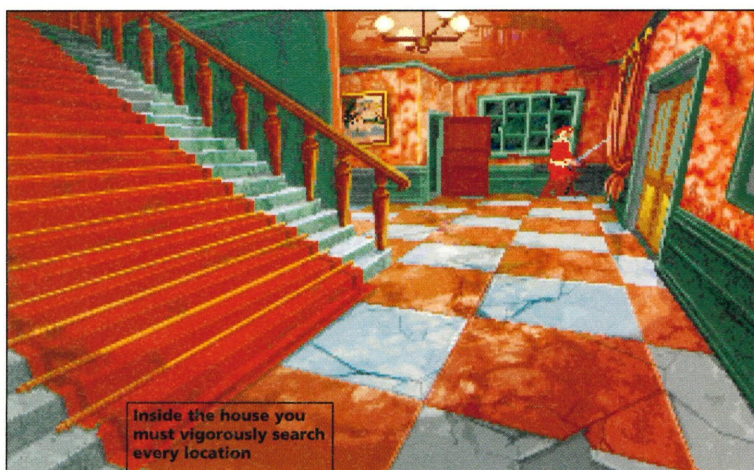
# ALONE IN THE

PUBLISHER	Infogrames
CONTACT	071 738 8199
TEAM	In-House
PRICE	£49.99
RELEASE DATE	Jan '94

An underground cave is reached. Here such terrors as ghosts come to accost you

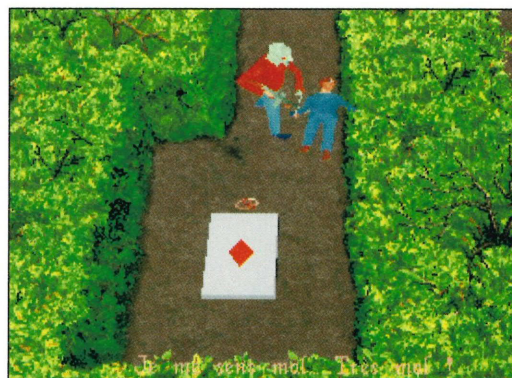


Out of the frying pan and into the fire, is this brief encounter your last?



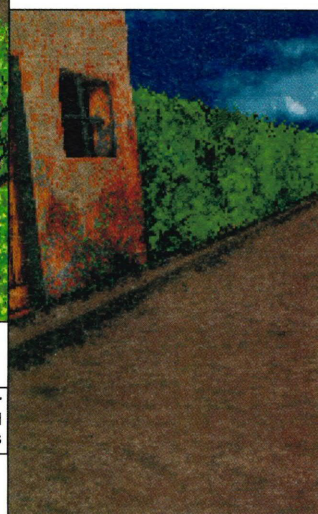
Inside the house you must vigorously search every location

*Edward Carnby, Private Eye of the Unknown, thrives on danger and suspense, so when he hears a cry for help he has to investigate further*



Playing cards are a recurring theme throughout the game. They offer clues as to how to proceed next...

... which becomes clear once you've located the next set of cards





# DARK 2

*'True strength is not a measure of the body. It is a measure of the soul'*

PHILISHAVE TV ADVERT

Heart in mouth, blood pumping through his veins and body taut with mental and physical robustness, Edward Carnby waits... and waits. Suddenly he hears the crunch of footsteps on gravel followed by the shout of 'morning Sir'. Around the corner of the labyrinthine maze appears a polygonal figure, gun in hand, intent on committing a swift and brutal murder.

Carnby retaliates. Bang... bang, he pumps a volley of lead from his machine-gun into the belly of the assailant. In return he receives a barrage of artificial wounds.

Drunk with pain he lashes out once again and, four rounds later, his enemy magically vanishes into the ground, leaving behind a loading clip. A triumphant crescendo of music sings in Carnby's ears. He takes a glug from the energy

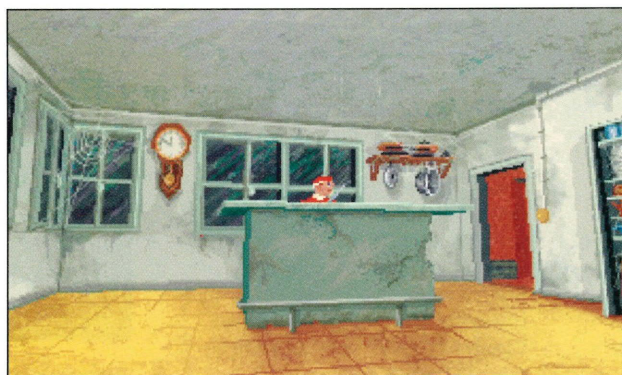
flask he found abandoned down one of the dead ends in the maze and then sets about reassessing his position.

Uh oh, another echo of footsteps. Quick, step behind a corner. There he can shoot but cannot be shot at. Take the enemy out and dash like hell down a long path, forever seeking out new avenues to explore, but forever happening upon new opponents, each deadlier than the last, some often recruiting a partner in crime to see off our hero in double measures.

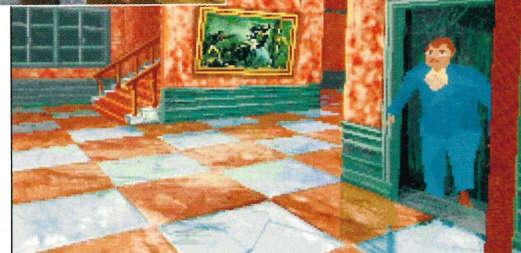


Music Man and his accordion happily wheeze away while Carnby just hangs around. Some use he is

And into the house our intrepid Private Eye goes. Down the vast hallway and into the rooms. Offshooting is the next task in hand and certainly a mammoth one at that...



In the kitchen, standing against a bar, but are you waiting for breakfast?



perspective the viewing of the action is engineered via a variety of camera angles. The game itself, boasting filled 3D polygons, displays a masterful mixture of action and adventure, although not of

the point and click kind.

Constructing a sequel to an obviously much loaded game is an incredibly hard act to follow, but Infogrames have been keen to take up the gauntlet with pride. They carefully consider how to make improvements wherever appropriate, while still retaining that inimitable style that makes the first Alone in the Dark such a showpiece.

The story has now moved on. Edward Carnby is called to a Californian mansion teetering on the edge of a high cliff overlooking the sea. A little girl, Grace

Saunders, has been kidnapped by the pirate One Eyed Jack and his mercenary crew of scallywags and they've taken her to Hell's Kitchen.

**Carnby must battle** his way through the grounds of the house, fighting off a whole host of motley characters and picking up clues along the way as the rescue of Grace draws ever nearer.

The very nature of the story dictates that action is not necessarily restricted to the confines of a house, as in the first Alone game.

A greater variety of locations is therefore called for and we're taken around the gardens that consist of labyrinthine mazes and then down to a subterranean network of cellars and caves. From there entry into the great

mansion can be made and an astonishing array of rooms: bathrooms, billiard room, bedroom, kitchen, hallway, attic, all holding their personal deep, dark secrets, may be ventured into. It's an extensive gameplaying arena, full of richly decorated scenes and so, quite rightly, demands a



The end of the maze, at last, has been reached. Only Shorty Leg who fires with a peg leg needs to be overcome

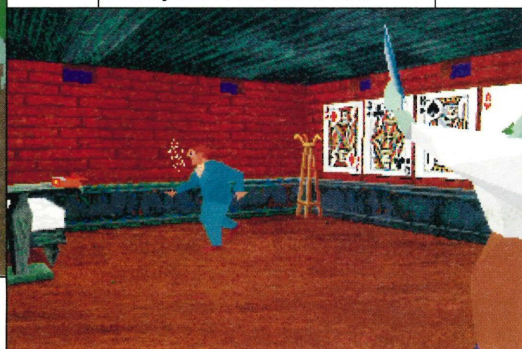
carefully crafted story on which to hinge the main thrice of action. Rather than being an add-on once the game's ►

Bear witness to the opening sequences of Alone in the Dark 2, a game that really is quite alone since it is an adventure like no other, one that both grips and infuriates, but one that will always keep the daring gamer coming back for more, fool that he is.

**Back in 1992** the first Alone in the Dark won a number of awards. In it we were introduced to Private Eye Edward Carnby (or alternatively his female counterpart should you wish to play a woman). He/she is brought in to investigate clandestine occurrences in a great and apparently empty house.

But, more importantly, we greeted a new kind of game in that rather than taking on a third or first person

And again cards come into play later on in the game. Study them carefully for they offer a number of clues





## ALONE IN THE DARK 2

Camera angles control how the player views the on-screen activities. A large number are employed to give the game its own distinctive feel



Take the straight on, come and have a go view

Opt for the side on view which offers a wonderful neck backlash effect in the midst of a fighting sequence



View the action from high above

From the perspective of an onlooker



► been designed, as you would think is often the case, the story is unravelled before our eyes the deeper into it we progress. It begins

quite vaguely but is all the better for it in that it adds to that essence of mysticism and the unknown that the game is trying to captivate.

Scraps from notebooks, books, photographs, they all offer snippets of information and clues. Whether this be about events from the past or those that have yet to happen in the game, and therefore help in piecing events

together in order to roll towards a successful denouement, even though this may be a long while in coming. Yes, a long, long while.

*This is a tough game*, incredibly so. And there's no easy way out. Enemies lie in ambush everywhere and a heavy dosage of maiming and machine-gun warfare really is the order of the day over and above the puzzling element of the game.

But it's not simply a case of shoot and be damned. Ammunition has to be conserved and life supplying energy is

never superfluous. Therefore it often falls that each incident has to be done and redone over and over again – relentlessly – until Carnby's methods of attack and subsequent triumph are absolutely 100 per cent perfect, no less, with a minimal amount of energy and bullets used in the process.

Here is where the game really does fall down because there is absolutely no room for error. There will undoubtedly come a time when a wealth of backtracking is necessary to perform sequences more proficiently because Carnby has insufficient stamina to proceed further.

*In the garden maze* in the early section of the game for example, ambushes have to be planned with the utmost care and a great deal of mental mapping is required just to get to the last baddie with still enough ammunition intact before having to venture underground.

But despite the lean towards the hack 'n' slash scenarios, this is a thinking man's game too. Enemies aren't just run of the mill, repetitive and predictable; they're not the same polygon

reincarnate. All of them must be dealt with accordingly.

One called Shorty Leg uses his wooden stump as a firearm, (maybe that should be leg?), Music Man attacks with an accordion, T-Bone, resident in the kitchen wields a pea shooter and a frying pan. And this is on top of the horde of pirates, each with their own method of fighting.

Means of attack range from the traditional array of firearms to swords. Even enticing enemies with whisky and jumping, literally, out of the line of fire and into the frying pan once a trip to



After the large number of trap doors in the maze all we need is another



Entry into the mansion cannot be made through the traditional front entrance and so you need to search for other ways of getting in. Perhaps going up these stairs will help

Avast yee hearties! A cannon. But tread carefully or that dozing guard is going to wake up and find you out



**'The game fosters that weird love/hate relationship.'**

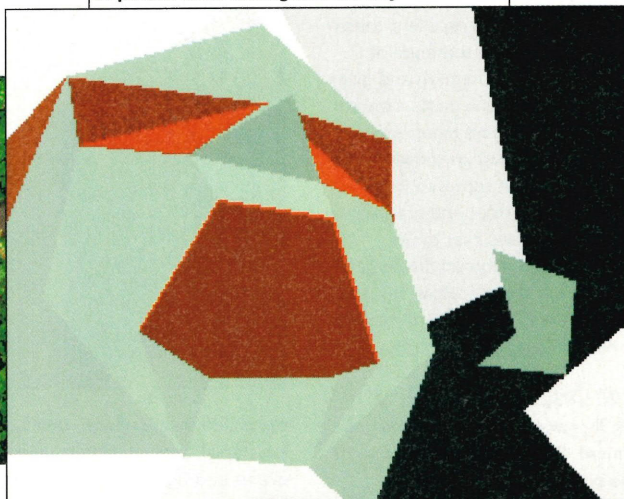




Even peep out from behind corners



Get rid of the bloke, still unaware of your presence, before he chucks you down the opening and down to the waters below



The little chef cries out for help before the gang of pirates come tearing into the fray



the kitchen has been done, calls for new fighting skills to be learned. If there are two or more enemies together, then maybe it is better to hide, run or figure out a different route.

Once dead though some may leave behind invaluable goods, so all areas do need to be covered. Scrimp, and sooner or later a great deal of backtracking will be necessary because of the basic linearity of the game.

Objects too can be picked up en route. Only when they are used in the appropriate place or with another item can riddles be solved and access to new areas be sought. Fail to pick something up or use items in the rooms that can be entered – more and more open up as progress is made – and eventually the game just won't let you advance any further, informing us in its own kind of way that something has been missed

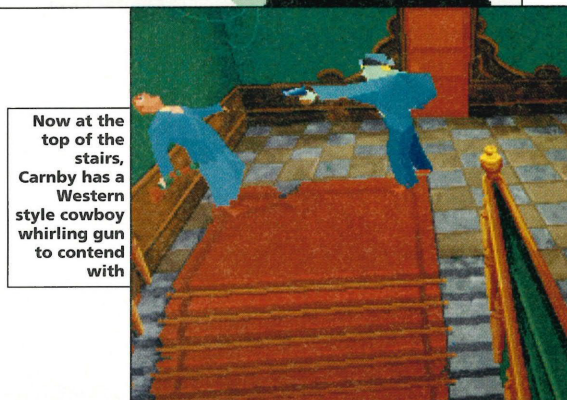


somewhere along the line and backtracking is needed.

On the whole though, the puzzles are pretty simple, nothing too bizarre and certainly not long-winded. About half way through the game though a new perspective does change the way action

is perceived. This comes in the shape of little Grace Saunders, the object of Carnby's trip.

She starts to control activities, from a child's eye point of view of course, thereby putting a new slant on proceedings as we're forced to ►

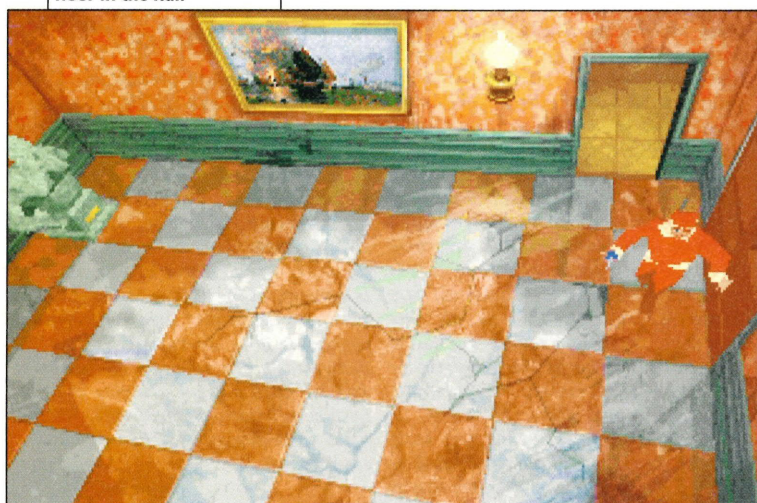


Now at the top of the stairs, Carnby has a Western style cowboy whirling gun to contend with



The bedroom has to be thoroughly searched to glean more clues

Be very careful when walking on the patterned floor in the Hall



The death scene, and one that you will see many many times before being thrown off the edge of the cliff into the ocean below

Love the richness of characterisations, graphics, ►



# ALONE IN THE DARK 2



► evaluate what to do while viewing things from four feet high. This is an excellent touch and change of direction and gives the game a breath

of fresh air. Indeed, in no mean way could Alone 2 be classed as conventional on the whole when it comes to its gameplan, user interface and graphics.

Of the excellent and easy to use variety, it's wholly keyboard driven and makes use of just the space bar, return key and directional arrows to control the actions and bring up the inventory.

**Easy to learn in a** matter of minutes, it provides hour upon hour of involvement. Neither is there any sign of hunt the pixel syndrome in sight.

Can't use an object in a particular place? Then a message will come up telling you so, avoiding a lot of finickiting about, and letting gamers get on with enjoying, not labouring over the business of playing.

Camera angles, a trademark of the first Alone, are again used here, but with even greater effect. Now there are many more. We witness close-ups, can look on

Down the ladder and on to the ship.....



....where you meet an array of loathsome characters. Yo, ho ho



Little Grace has really messed up, so Carnby's in trouble

the action from on high, side view, from a distance, around corners, even hear events and figure out what is occurring before seeing it thanks to the wonderful sound effects.

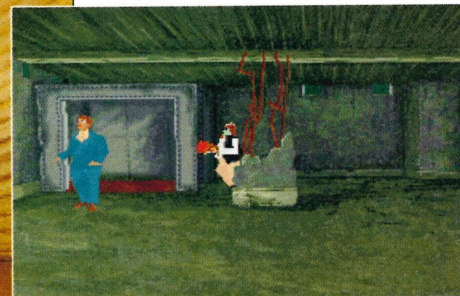
It's as though the designers are experimenting with a film production and such innovation, of which the seeds were sown in the first Alone, makes a refreshing change from simply taking a third person perspective as is so commonplace in the majority of action, adventure games.

Of course this game can't make its predecessor look shallow and inferior at the end of the day. Alone in the Dark and its bestsellerdom status is just far too good for that, but it really does try and inflate the premise from which this game started and maximise every fine point about it. This it manages to do, but there does

seem to be a distinct shortage of real adventuring and puzzle solving with far too heavy a reliance of the beat'em-up aspect of the game.

One has to admit this in itself is quite good fun but it does eventually become fairly tedious and you'll soon find yourself yearning for something, anything that might put the old grey matter to the test.

The difficulty level too becomes a dead weight very early on, and maybe many gamers will become far too frustrated to really reach the enjoyability bracket of what should of been the biggest and the best in game playing entertainment. Nothing spoils a game more than when you really enjoy it but cannot get to the really juicy bits!



He's behind yooooou! Oops too late, another infuriating moment from a difficult game

## data bank

<b>MINIMUM MEMORY</b>
256k+2Mb
<b>MINIMUM PROCESSOR</b>
386
<b>OPTIMUM SPEED</b>
25MHz
<b>INSTALLATION</b>
Essential
<b>HARD DISK SPACE</b>
14MB
<b>GRAPHICS</b>
VGA
<b>SOUND CARDS</b>
Adlib, SoundBlaster, The Sound Source
<b>CONTROLS</b>
Mouse

## appraisal

**Y**ou wouldn't be far wrong in thinking that the only way in which Alone in the Dark 2 could stumble would be under the sheer weight of the awards it will collect this year. It improves upon its forefather in any number of ways - it's faster, richer in characterisations and locale and is a massive four times larger, making it positively elephantine in proportions and thus excellent value for money. What better acme could a game have? Well, maybe so but I can't help thinking that it forgoes enjoyabilty for sheer difficulty. As one hack and slash scene stumbles over the heels of the next, it becomes a real drudge to make progress simply because it's very very hard, and pretty linear with it too. This is in no way helped by the measly six save game options, barely enough. It's inevitable that you have to familiarise yourself with the layout of a game and the objectives before making real progress, but when you have to keep on backtracking and redoing the very same fighting sequences until you're sick to death of the sight of them before they're

100 per cent perfect, then the overall appeal does start to wear a bit thin. As such, much of the spontaneity and instinctiveness is gone, making it more a deadweight trial of perseverance rather than a captivating product.

SHARON GREAVES

## second opinion

**I**n my opinion the area in which this game falls down is the difficulty. I initially spent two or three hours trying to get past the first few screens only to find out a simple push would have by-passed this upheaval. It is extremely hard, difficult, tough, trying, demanding, unmanageable to a point where you want to throw your PC out of the window. Infogrames seem to have listened to the criticisms of the first Alone very closely, perhaps a little too closely. Putting the gameplay to one side you will discover that the game's graphic engine and size have been improved considerably but this hides in the shadows of the gameplay.

PAUL ASKEW

PCA SCORE **80%**

# plot and size, but hate the level of difficulty'



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8-bit COMPARISON	MONO	STEREO
No Of Sound Standards	2	3
AdLib	•	•
Sound Blaster Version 2	•	•
Convex Speech Thing	•	•
Disney Sound Source	•	•
FM SYNTHESIZER - OPL2	•	•
FM SYNTHESIZER - OPL3	•	•
MANUAL VOLUME CONTROL	•	•
DIGITAL SOFTWARE VOLUME CONTROL	•	•
DIGITAL BASS & TREBLE CONTROL	•	•
SAMPLING RATE, RECORDING UP TO:	23KHz	15KHz
SAMPLING RATE, PLAYBACK UP TO:	44.1KHz	44.1KHz
GAME PORT, WITH MIDI OPTION	•	•
DYNAMIC FILTERING FOR BETTER SOUND	•	•
CD AUDIO IN	•	•
CAN USE MICROPHONE AND CD DURING DIGITAL PLAYBACK	•	•
SMT BOARD FOR BETTER RELIABILITY	•	•
FREE SPEAKERS	•	•
CD-ROM INTERFACE (AT-BUS)	•	•
PANASONIC INTERFACE	•	•
MITSUMI INTERFACE	•	•
SONY INTERFACE	•	•
CD-ROM INTERFACE (SCSI)	•	•
MICROPHONE AGC AMPLIFIER	•	•
STEREO MICROPHONE INPUT	•	•
SOFTWARE SELECTABLE IRQ, DMA & ADDRESS SETTING CONFIGURATION	•	•
RETAINED WHEN POWER OFF	•	•
MIXER SUPPORT FROM MORE THAN ONE SOURCE DURING RECORDING	•	•
BUILT-IN AMPLIFIER	•	•
STEREO LINES IN AND OUT	•	•

16-bit COMPARISON	STEREO
No Of Sound Standards	6
AdLib	•
Sound Blaster Version 2	•
Microsoft Windows Sound System	•
Convex Speech Thing	•
Disney Sound Source	•
FM SYNTHESIZER - OPL3	•
DIGITAL SOFTWARE VOLUME CONTROL	•
DIGITAL BASS & TREBLE CONTROL	•
CD QUALITY SAMPLING RATE, RECORDING & PLAYBACK UP TO:	44.1KHz
GAME PORT, WITH MIDI OPTION	•
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CAN USE MICROPHONE AND CD DURING DIGITAL PLAYBACK	•
CD-ROM INTERFACE (AT-BUS)	•
PANASONIC INTERFACE	•
MITSUMI INTERFACE	•
SONY INTERFACE	•
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**SCSI EXTENSION BOARD**  
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2 SOUND STANDARDS



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 • CD-ROM Interfaces (Built-In) For:  
 Panasonic & Mitsumi Drives. Optional Sony Connector (See Above).  
 • Software Configuration Settings in Eeprom:  
 Card Doesn't Reset on 'Power-Off'  
 • Software Control of Volume, Bass & Treble  
 • Built-In Amplifier & MIDI Interface  
 • 14 Software Titles Included + Utilities & Drivers  
 • Wave Power Upgrade (See Above)

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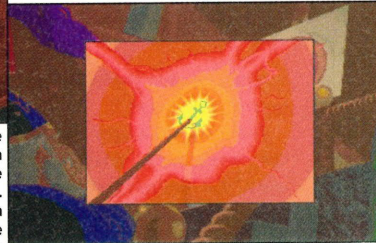
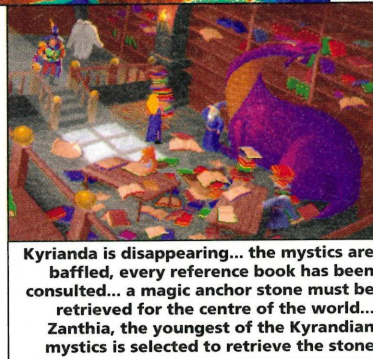
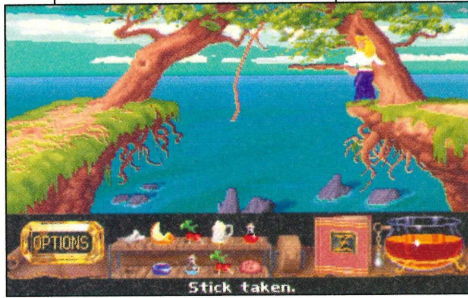


# HAND OF FATE

PUBLISHER	Virgin
CONTACT	081 960 2255
TEAM	Westwood
PRICE	£39.99
RELEASE DATE	Out Now



The mystic Zanthia negotiates a tricky obstacle, don't look downnnnnnnnn.....



Not a pacemaker in sight at the Ferry across the... still he won't take you unless you come up with some gold



*The second Virgin/Westwood title, Lands of Lore, did well. Westwood now return and release the second volume in their Fables and Fiends series*

*'Never extend your hand further than you can withdraw it'*

SEUMAS MACMANUS  
1869-1960 IRISH AUTHOR

**W**estwood Studios used to be one of the most innovative independent software houses. They have designed and produced several superb games (albeit for other publishers) including Eye of the Beholder I and II.

Last year they became part of the Virgin Games empire and have released two of their own products – the recent Lands Of Lore (using a development of their EOTB engine) and their first born – Legend of Kyrandia.

The sheriff's office in Morningmist Valley showing the extraordinary level of detail in Westwood's continuing adventures in Kyrandia



Kyrandia I is a graphic adventure in the Sierra mould with a simple point and click interface, set in a mystical world of magic and featuring a nutty arch villain called Malcolm. This was a rather impressive debut release, with excellent graphics, a solid soundtrack and a nice easy to use interface.

Although well received, purists have commented that it has a linear plot and the puzzles (with a couple of exceptions) are very traditional. The informed view seemed to be that it was a promising start but that subsequent Westwood products needed to stand out from the crowd, rather than join it.

**But can the sequel,** Hand Of Fate, really achieve what it is set out to do? Here you control the actions of Zanthia the young mystic in her quest to retrieve the Flange of Boznoz, eh sorry, The Lost Jewels of Gnasto, no... it's the Purple Sword of Nigel, no, no. Ok I've got it, it's definitely the Anchor Stone (must be getting confused with another game, or one of another 100 games). This important bit of kit lies at the

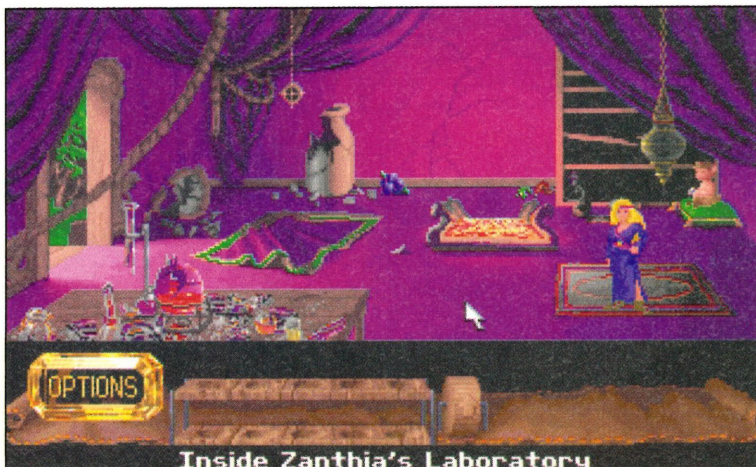
centre of the world and you must retrieve it to stop Kyrandia disappearing into its own crystal ball.

The Hand of Fate of the title obviously owes some of its inspiration to the Addams Family – it is a six foot high, self propelled hand that acts as valet to your pal Marko (and seems to spend most of its time wandering around in swamps).

The Hand was the only one who seemed to have any idea as to how to counteract the vanishing landscape and it is his advice that has you heading to the core to find the Anchor Stone.

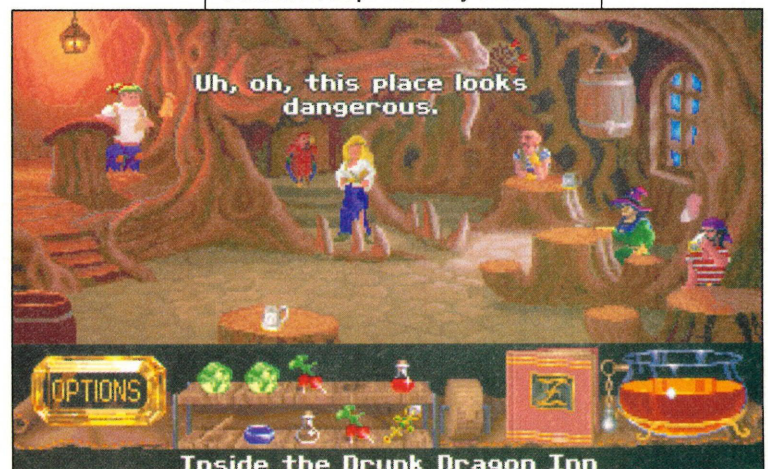
The plotline in HOF is still a little linear, with the gaming world divided into half-a-dozen major areas each consisting of up to 16 or 17 locations.

The graphics are of the highest standard – those in Kyrandia 1 aren't bad, but these are exceptional. ▶



Zanthia's lab – where your adventure begins, and what a mess. Who is that in the corner there? Oh it's little Faun...

Pop into your local and have a quick root beer – a deliberate swipe at Monkey Island?





# HAND OF FATE



► Westwood have introduced a much higher use of perspective, with your character shrinking in size as

she walks away. This also means that the scenery in the locations has far more of a 3-D feel and has allowed Westwood's graphic artists full rein.

In parts HOF looks very similar to the LucasArts' Monkey Island and Indiana Jones adventures and it is also dotted with a quite wicked sense of humour. From the earliest screens this is obvious as our feminine adventurer mixes it with a horrible bug-eyed monster and ends up roughing it up and leaving it with its tongue in a knot.

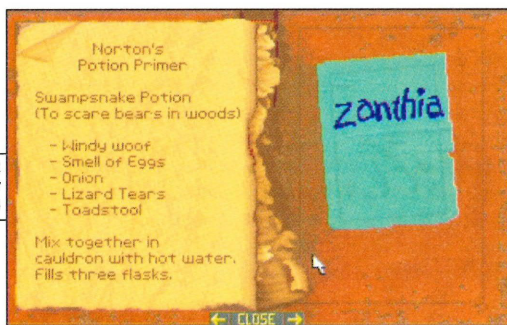
**There are numerous** side swipes at other graphic adventures, RPGs and literature with pirates and root beer (Secret of Monkey Island), the milking of cows (Return to Zork) and scarecrows coming to life (answers on a postcard please to The Wizard of Oz, The Emerald City, Over the Rainbow).

Most of the locations in HOF also have additional animation and lots of the puzzles have multiple solutions. These are all basically object manipulation problems, but there is also a heavy emphasis on combining several objects in order to progress.

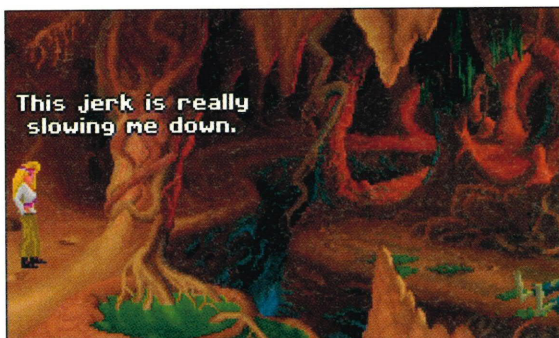
The magic system, as in Kyrandia, is a little different, no multi-coloured jewels here, but all of the spells revolve around a limited number of potion concoctions. The tongue in cheek sense of humour also raises itself here with a piece of Gnarly Bark being a Windy Woof and Smell of Eggs being a block of Sulphur. No hundreds of spells here (again games designers please note) just a

Zanthia's spell book holds recipes for magic potions

Pick up the feather in the bird's nest. Useful for later



A few more of these and I could fly across the lake.



A wild assortment of beasts and creatures are to be met, jerks included

sensible number that are used once or twice in the game.

The interface is very simple and is completely mouse driven – there is no use of the 'default verb' approach of the LucasArts products, nor the 'cyclable multi-action' cursor of Sierra-On-Line. Here if you click on an item you pick it up and click again to drop it. Each object has only one real use, click on a door and it opens (refreshingly it doesn't say that 'you can't talk to a door' – which has often happened in some games).

**Now there are two** schools of thought with regard to this type of interface. One is that it is the simplest and the best – most objects only have one main use in a game.

Why should you try and open an object that just does not open? Why spend hours and hours trying absolutely useless actions on every single item in the game? KISS – Keep it Simple Stupid and concentrate on the actual game



Once you get past the guards it's all so easy, but what a work of art

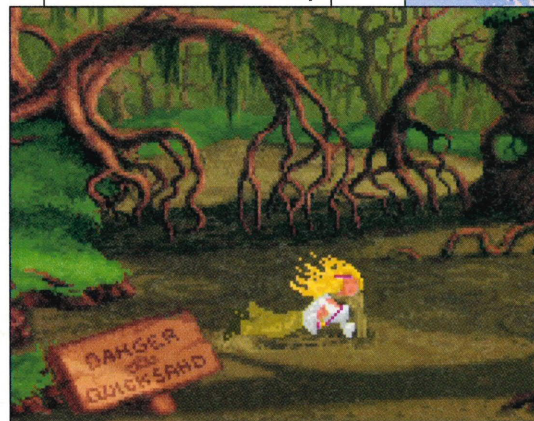
rather than a swish but mostly redundant interface.

The other school preaches that this approach is too simple, it is far too linear and spoils the game. If you want to try and pick up the mountain you should be allowed to. If your decision is to spend half the game trying to talk to flowers, clouds and brick walls – so be it. It introduces mystery and diversification into the game. It avoids you picking up an object and knowing exactly what you are going to do with it and when, ie. it introduces an element of uncertainty and greater variety.

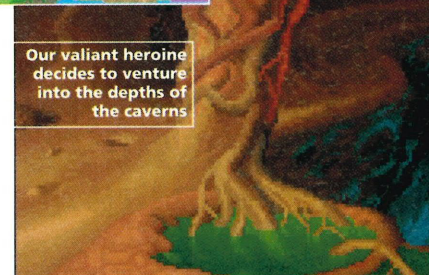
**Two diverse views**, both have their merits and both their limits. As far as this reviewer is concerned playability as opposed to technical advances is the real criteria and Hand of Fate just about gets over that hurdle.

The objects, or rather the uses of some of them are not totally clear and with a clever regular clear out of the inventory, new items are frequently introduced. They are easily used without spending hours and hours working through your

Death comes all too easily. This time sucked down in the swamp



A couple of fishermen bid Zanthia good day as she goes past



inventory trying every single object as a key to open that blasted locked door.

For all the various actions inherent in the Sierra games and the LucasArts products, most items have only one obvious use or purpose (Monkey wrenches excepted) so why is there any need to complicate matters?

Moving on quickly, the soundtrack and audio effects are polished. Look out for the CD-Rom version hopefully with full digitised sound track – there were rumours of some famous actors and actresses providing voice overs, but we

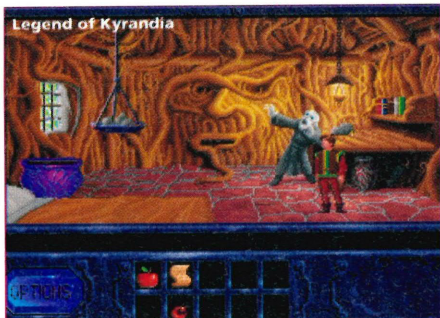


Natural Bridge



## déjà-vu

**L**egends of Kyrandia is Westwood's earliest effort in the adventure game genre. It was an excellent attempt to cash in on the success of LucasArts' Monkey Island II and also Indiana Jones & the Fate of Atlantis. Visually, it remains very impressive but the storyline is simply far too linear and the puzzles are also incredibly obscure to give it that much needed push to the top of the tree. Fortunately Hand of Fate has improved in both of these areas but that magical ingredient that makes the LucasArts adventures so appealing is still missing. Hand of Fate is far superior to Legends of Kyrandia but it may be a while yet before the big boys are really challenged.



An impressive shot showing the greater use of perspective in HOF – Zanthia is standing all the way up top there



Well into the game and Zanthia has found her way down into the Centre of the World

shall wait and see. The individual characterisation and movement too is superbly executed.

**The puzzles vary** considerably, some are randomly generated and the solution will vary from game to game. A couple involve some repetitive to-ing and fro-ing which does tend to let the game down a bit – the gaming world is certainly big enough without these 'padding' techniques.

Be warned that some puzzles also use a solution to an earlier problem so a

minimal amount of note taking is required if you don't want to come face to face with an insurmountable hurdle. Hint: You should let this colour your views!

The gaming world in Hand Of Fate is arranged in such a way that auto-mapping is irrelevant and it does seem that a major software

company has actually been able to write an adventure game without including the obligatory maze.

Multiple saves are allowed and are needed – be warned. Unlike the 'fail-safe' systems built into other graphic

adventures, in HOF not only can you be killed very easily indeed and also completely without warning, as in Sierra's King's Quest adventures in fact, but you can also mis-use critical items.

At one stage you need to use a magnet to escape from prison. If you've already dropped it then it's life imprisonment with no parole and a lot of save game backtracking to regain the right course. Other items may be randomly reproduced but it is still too easy to make a mistake you'll come to rue later on.

## appraisal

**A** traditional graphic adventure with Westwood continuing to establish themselves in the PC gaming world. Still a bit linear and nothing startlingly new. Graphically some of the very best locations seen in any game, the puzzles vary in difficulty and the CD-Rom version promises great things. Solid stuff with no real risks taken in plot or game design. Very enjoyable and well worth a look, this makes Kyrandia III almost a certainty and just maybe Westwood might step a little nearer to the edge.

ROBIN MATTHEWS

## second opinion

**L**egends of Kyrandia was a great first for Westwood but the plot was far too

linear. Unfortunately, Hand of Fate suffers from the same problem and although it features some of the most beautifully drawn backdrops I have yet seen on a computer, it still remains very frustrating in areas. There are some very cunning puzzles indeed that will provide a worthy challenge for even the most hardened of adventurers – beginners should watch out. I doubt very much that the CD-Rom version will improve on the gameplay as the extra storage space seems to be taken up with extra graphics and sounds. Westwood are certainly improving all the time but they really do need to change the design plots of their games by taking just a little more care and also attention in what they do – and most importantly, incorporating that much needed freedom to avoid unnecessary tedium.

STEVE WHITE

PCA SCORE **82%**



A vein of humour runs throughout the entire game, often originating from the gutsy gal herself

## data bank

**MINIMUM MEMORY**  
2MB-570k

**MINIMUM PROCESSOR**  
386

**OPTIMUM SPEED**  
33MHz

**INSTALLATION**  
Essential

**HARD DISK SPACE**  
20 MEG

**GRAPHICS**  
VGA or MCGA

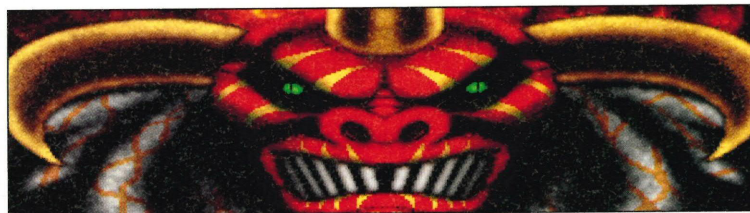
**SOUND CARDS**  
Roland, SoundBlaster, Adlib

**CONTROLS**  
Mouse



# WIZARD

PUBLISHER	Psygnosis
CONTACT	051 709 5755
TEAM	Tag & P James
PRICE	TBA
RELEASE DATE	Out Now



*The most astounding facts are that Wizard comes to you on two high density floppies, will install to under 3Mb of hard disk space and the saved games take a mere 63k*



Pillars and locked gates are a major headache – and things will only get worse

*'One does not discover new lands without consenting to lose sight of the shore for a very long time'*

ANDRÉ GIDE 1869-1951

Some of the monsters are quite tasty – but don't get carried away, these are lethal



I don't know what it is, but I'm getting out of here – fast!

It must be mighty difficult for the creators of role-playing games to come up with something innovative. Investing months of development time to produce an absolutely unique product is a risky business when tried and tested formats are still proving to be very popular.

We've had top-down, 3-D isometric and first-person perspective viewpoints,



**G'Narr**  
Helmcleaver, Dragon Warrior. Legends tell of an order of Dragon-Knights who came from the far North bringing death to all creatures of evil intent.

Although G'Narr is not of that order he is devout in his pursuit of their beliefs and is a mighty adversary to all who fight for the Evil One.



**Blodwyn**  
Earthmother, Earth Warrior. Golems are very loyal and have long memories. Therefore when Blodwyn was rescued from imprisonment in a glacier with a

fiery blast from the then young Zothien Runecaster, she vowed to help the cause of humans whenever she could and so became an adventurer.



**Karnak Necretius**, Chaos Wizard. Many have misunderstood the followers of the Chaos God and they are generally feared and shunned normal folk.

Karnak though, understands the true nature of Chaos and is the natural force of the universe and has thus vowed to fight evil, even when he must kill his own kind.



**Arundel**  
Lorkunath, Dragon Assassin. Arundel is a hired killer. One day he was commissioned to murder a young princess, but found himself unable to carry

out his task. Knowing that failure meant death at the hands of his former masters, he now wanders the land using his skills for good instead of evil.

all in combinations of both single and multiple parties, but no one has come up with something really new.

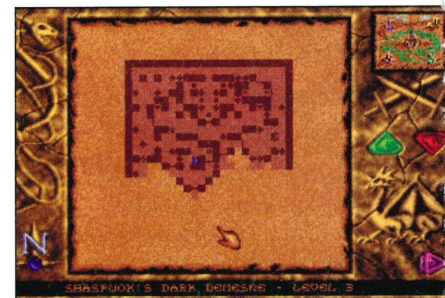
The top-rated RPGs over the last couple of years were Underworld I and II. Their huge size, complex plots, detailed graphics and, in particular, their smooth scrolling movement placed them head and shoulders above the opposition, but these factors also made them inaccessible to those with low spec machines and small hard drives.

They also restricted you to control of just one character. Many fans of role-playing, myself included, particularly enjoy nurturing a multiple party through the ravages of hunger and thirst, not to mention disease and death.

*So anyone who* could come up with a first person perspective and smoothly scrolling game engine that puts you in control of a party of wizards and warriors should have something to take role-playing that step nearer to the ultimate experience.

Enter Psygnosis with Wizard, coded by Tag with graphics by Pete James, the

## 'It scores full

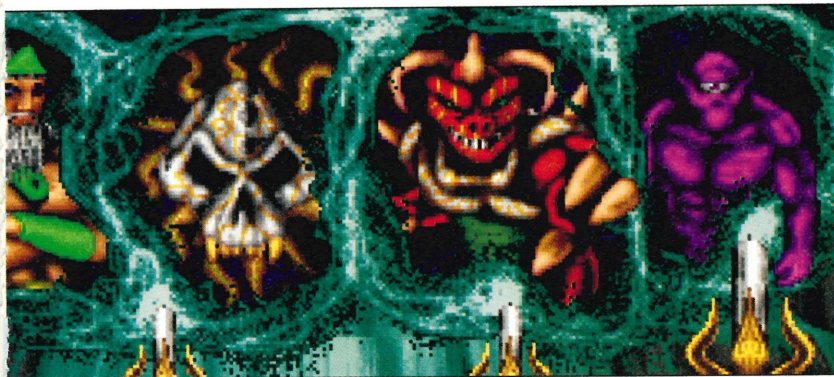


You can call up the automap at any time to see previous levels in a tower...



...plus the levels in any other towers you have completed





team who brought you the very enjoyable Legend a couple of years ago.

In fact, it has a definite feel of Legend about it, with its constant search for keys to open locked doors, monster bashing for gold and trading for the ultimate in weapons and magical potions. But its first person perspective viewpoint, scrolling movement and, at last, a four-character party means it has something extra to offer both lovers of the original and fans of the Underworld games.

The interface has made particularly clever use of both mouse buttons for accessing all the available options, which means that apart from viewing the autopmap and options screens, the

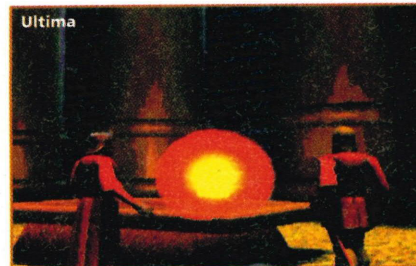
viewing window is visible at all times.

This two-button system for everything is unique in role-playing games and does take a while to get used to. During the first few hours many will probably criticise it as being difficult or clumsy, but believe me, with practice it will grow on you and soon becomes a doddle to use. Keyboard alternatives are available for many of the options for those who prefer them.

The game offers 40 levels of dungeons and more than 500 monsters with which to do battle in your search for four artifacts – The Eye of Grisslem, The Tear of Shaspuok, The Heart of Angrath and the Horn of Xtlaltic – which you must

## deja-vu

Very similar in concept is *Ultima Underworld 2*. It's a single-character role-playing challenge viewed from a first person 3D perspective but with much greater control of character statistics, a far more complex plot, more devious, convoluted puzzles, and interaction with the characters that goes far beyond just killing them off. Only by conversing can you obtain the necessary information to succeed. In addition, items you collect have to be used in specific ways. *Wolfenstein*, on the other hand, is a typical example of an out-and-out blast 'em-up as you try to shoot your way past hundreds of Nazis in multi level complex. Sure there are puzzles but the main objective is to kill all the enemy and get out alive. There is no other form of interaction with the characters and the only items to collect are bullets, health tokens and keys to lifts between levels.



return to their rightful resting places to gain access to the Wizard's Tower.

You can dive straight in with a pre-selected party or set up your own from the four alternatives of each of the classes available – warrior, ranger, assassin and wizard. Just right click on the portraits to view the characters' stats, left click and a character is added to your group.

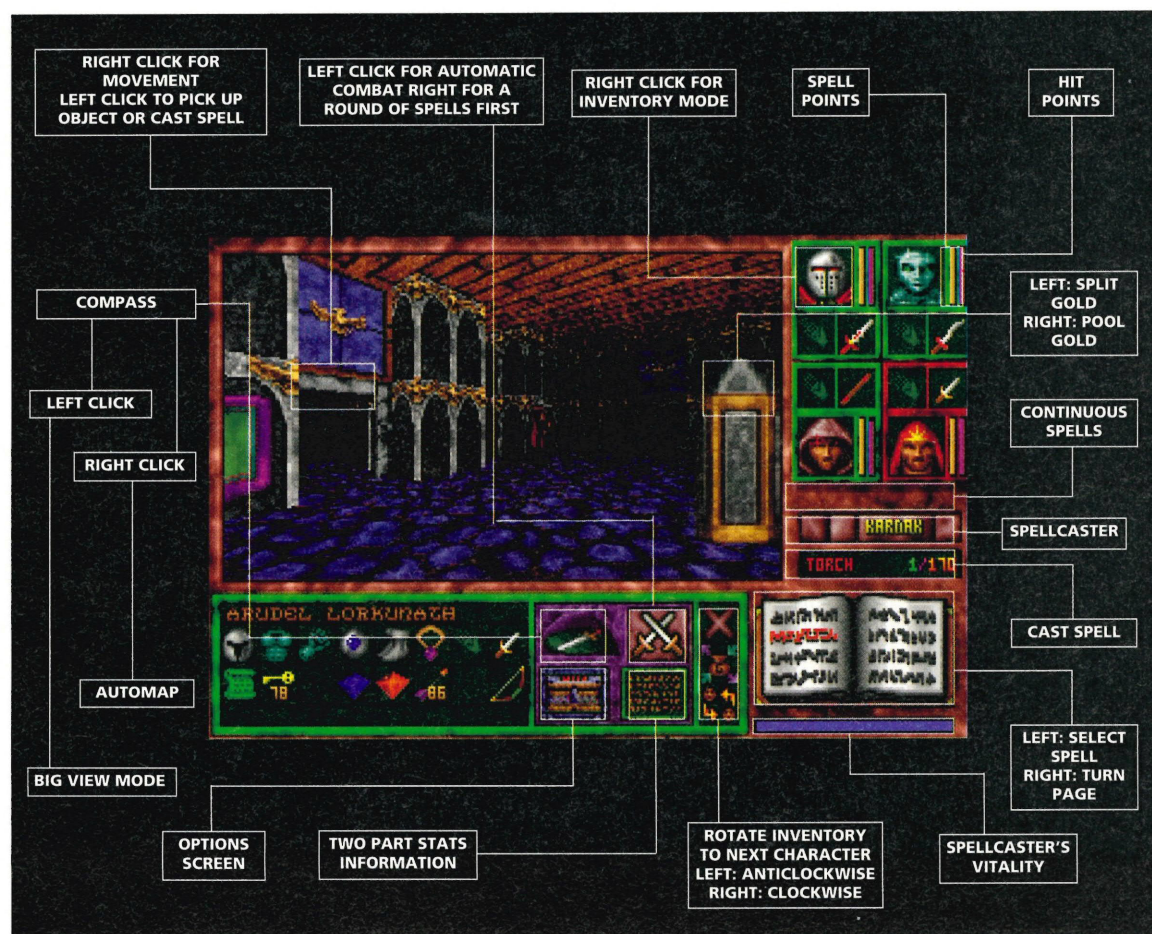
There is no restriction to the contents of a party. Choose four warriors if you wish or even four wizards, but the ideal

combination is one of each as they have their own strengths and weaknesses.

All can cast magic but some are better at it than others. Wizards gain magical spells at a faster rate than the rest but they are not as strong and cannot use any other weapons than a staff.

The interface offers three modes – normal, inventory and big-view. The first is the default and displays the main viewing window and your character portraits with hands showing items ready for use. There are also different

# marks and gets 1994 off to a flying start'



icons which represent the spell book, direction of travel (a sword) and combat (cross swords).

Movement around the game world is accomplished by clicking in the viewing window with the left mouse button. The higher up the screen you click, the faster you move. Additional use of the keyboard alternatives provides more flexibility and I found a combination to be best, using the arrow keys to move around and the mouse to pick up objects and open doors.

**Clicking in the** viewing window with the right button will cast a selected spell from each character, but if the cursor is placed near an object the default pointed finger turns into a grasping hand and allows the object to be picked up.

The mouse buttons also have dual roles with the icons. For example, clicking left on a face icon will transfer any currently selected object to that character's inventory, while clicking right moves into Inventory mode. Here the bottom third of the screen displays the selected character's possessions in 12 inventory slots.

Other icons to the right will access player stats in two pages and the Options screen where you can load and save games and reduce graphic detail. Other icons allow pooling or splitting ▶





Big-View mode takes up the whole screen and is only recommended for fast machines



The eight-frame animation is adequate for what is required



Shops are handy for offloading excess gear and for stocking up with things you need



Looks like we're in for it here. Better head for the nearest healing area

► gold and rotating the current inventory either clockwise (right click) or anti-clockwise (left click).

Clicking left on the direction indicator in either mode displays the automap where you can see a plan view of any level of any of the five towers, provided you've been there of course.

Clicking right moves into Big-View mode. Apart from a row of small icons at the bottom of the display, this fills the entire screen but is only recommended for faster machines. A right click on a character's face will revert back to Inventory mode.

Left clicking on the combat icon immediately initiates automatic hand-to-hand fighting with the readied weapons, while a right click first unleashes a round of currently selected spells.

**Full party manual** combat would be next to impossible to control and the automation is a great solution. This leaves you free to manipulate your characters' inventories in the heat of battle – far better than the stop/start of AD&D games.

During your travels you will come across beds where your party can sleep and recover hit points and spell power. The rate of heal depends on how hungry your characters are, so keeping them well fed is vital. You'll also find regeneration chambers where, providing at least one of the team is still on his feet, the others will be brought back to life and healed.

On some levels you will find shops. There are two different kinds, one dealing in weaponry and armour, the other with magical potions and scrolls. Both have an ample supply of food and both will buy the other's goods, but

there's no bartering. Here you can stock up with the essentials for survival and also offload many of the surplus items that you have acquired as a result of your conquest.

Many items, from food to keys, are dropped by defeated monsters but most leave a bag of gold and the more you can collect the more you can buy.

**Another unique** option in Wizard is a Ramsave. A press of the R key at any time will save your current position to memory and means that anyone who is paranoid about saving regularly will find the five save-to-disk slots quite adequate. The facility to turn down the graphics detail makes the game playable by those with lower spec machines.

Puzzles aplenty will keep the old grey matter ticking over. From teleporter pads, spinner tiles and pits, to buttons and levers which when used together

will rotate or remove dungeon furniture to give access to hitherto inaccessible areas and items.

It's not without its failings. The graphics become very blocky when you get close to them, there's no verbal interaction with characters and although the scenery for each of the five towers is different, the levels within are very similar and one corridor looks very much like another.

As it is, it comes on two high density floppies, will install to under 3Mb of hard disk space and saved games occupy a mere 63k.

When I assess a game for an overall mark my main criteria is always – was it fun to play?

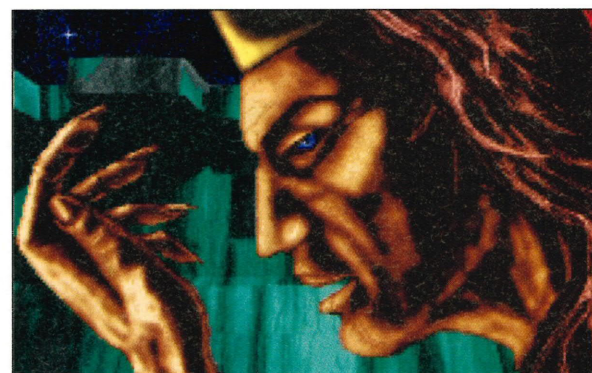
The answer with Wizard is a resounding Yes. I was

completely addicted to it over Christmas and after many hours slotted in between the cooking, eating, drinking and the washing up, I managed to complete it with a feeling of immense achievement.

And I have now started it again with



You'll encounter beds at regular intervals where you can recover hit and spell points



## appraisal

**S**orry Origin, but I suspect I must be one of a small number of role-players who thought that Underworld was over-rated. Sure the graphics were superb, the smooth scrolling a joy to behold and the plot clever and in the early stages good fun. I'm no mug when it comes to RPGs but in Underworld II, bugs apart, by the time I had completed the Academy and entered the Ethereal Void my brain had taken so much damage that if it hadn't been for a lot of help I would never have finished it. It seemed more and more an exercise for the game designer to show how clever he was. Wizard, on the other hand, although offering much of the same, has managed to retain that one aspect vital to success – playability. In that

department it scores full marks and gets 1994 off to a flying start.

ALAN McLACHLAN

## second opinion

**I**'ve got to admit that Wizard is one of the best first-player perspective RPGs I have ever played. The 3D bitmap engine is fast and very smooth and moving around the complex dungeon systems is a breeze. When close up to objects, walls and characters, the graphics are a little pixelly but not so bad that they detract from the game. The already tense atmosphere is enhanced by a moody tune and scary sound effects. Wizard is a great game that I would highly recommend.

STEVE WHITE

PCA SCORE **93%**

## data bank

**MINIMUM MEMORY**  
450+800k

**MINIMUM PROCESSOR**  
286 on minimum graphic detail

**OPTIMUM SPEED**  
33MHz

**INSTALLATION**  
Yes

**HARD DISK SPACE**  
3MB max

**GRAPHICS**  
VGA

**SOUND CARDS**  
Roland, SoundBlaster, Adlib

**CONTROLS**  
Keyboard, Mouse



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### APOGEE GAMES

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### TOP GAMES

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MOREJONG – New monster mahjong. JIGSAW PUZZLE VGA – Good for kids. SNAKES AND LADDERS – Superb VGA game. MAHJONG – Addictive oriental tile game. SPACE FLIGHT SIMULATOR – Rocket sim. GREEN – Good puzzle many levels & EGA + CADDIE HACK GOLF – 18 hole 3D game. CAPTURE THE FLAT – VGA animated combat. MEGATRON 3D (2) – Role playing adventure. INDIANA JONES FATE – Shareware version. MARIO VGA – Collect coins, tip up tortoises. SANDSTORM – Gulf war sim with scuds. MORKIN 2 – D&D game kill the wizard. DRACULA IN LONDON – Graphics adventure. GALACTIX – 100 level brill shoot em up. AVARICIUS – Amusing adventure in Pompeii. ZENTRIS – Excellent Tetris game. 1993TRIS – Updated Tetris variation. SCORCHED EARTH – VGA battle tanks. MELTDOWN – Prevent nuclear disaster. XMAS LEMMINGS – Dressed as Santa. LLAMATRON – Best shoot em up 100 levels.

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# UNNATURAL SELECTION

**PUBLISHER** Maxis  
**CONTACT** 071 490 2333  
**TEAM** Disney Software  
**PRICE** £29.99  
**RELEASE DATE** Out Now

*'The sleep of reason breeds monsters'*

FRANCISCO GOYA



Attack on the island commences. Perhaps an encounter to the east and west with a formation bringing up the rear will suffice

**You** play Dr Ted Jackson, a ground-breaking genetic scientist who is diligently working to end world hunger. You have created three new species of large, docile creatures called Theroids. Just as your experiments are about to begin, one of your colleagues, the demented Dr Ingrid Skinner, disappears into the uncharted waters of the South Pacific. Then, six months later, Ingrid returns but this time with a few new species which are not so much docile as uncontrollably violent.

There is no time to lose. Whisked off by the stone-faced Colonel Franklin Griggs you turn a US aircraft carrier into a makeshift laboratory. By the time you reach the first of Dr Skinner's Theroid infested islands, you should have bred an army of your own.

From a central control room you can regulate the entire breeding programme. In the top right of your

control panel there is an overhead view of the animals in their pens. You can click on individual creatures and zoom in for a closer look. Using 'claymation' style graphics you can see the Theroids doing one of their three main pastimes – eating, mating and fighting. Don't get too excited about the mating part, just imagine two balls of plasticine being squeezed together into one big lump, that's mating. The animation is not exactly spectacular or even very useful, but at least it gives you an idea of what you are meant to be dealing with.

**You have three** Theroid types to work with. Slugs are big and blue and slimy – kind of a cross between a tortoise and a gigantic mollusc, without the shell. Hulks are green and very ugly, with legs like two inelegant tree stumps. Zips, as the name suggests, are considerably much lighter on their feet, but generally lack the strength and stamina of the other two. All creatures

have their genetic pros and cons, and your job is to inter-breed the animals with the strongest characteristics and eliminate the ones that are dead weight.

One way of doing this is to put the best of the breeds together in a pen and let them get on with it. However, you don't have the time to wait for nature to take its course. Therefore by increasing the level of radiation (the 'mutation' level) you can alter the beasts at a genetic level and boost your chances of breeding a super-being. With a scanner you can measure the needs of the creatures and also quantify what their genetic characteristics are.

The best animals can be 'grabbed' and isolated, so that their strengths can be multiplied. The runts of the litter, however, are either ignored or permanently removed. This is done by simply clicking on a button marked 'Kill', which causes the screen to momentarily flicker. You hear a small crackling sound which makes it seem like a really authentic electrocution. And if you find this a little disturbing, you are not alone.

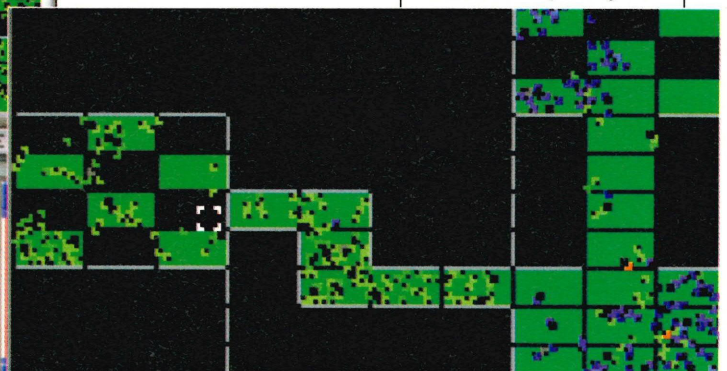


*Unnatural Selection is all about hideous crimes committed against nature. It might sound like a gruesome premise for a game, but it can be surprisingly engrossing all the same*

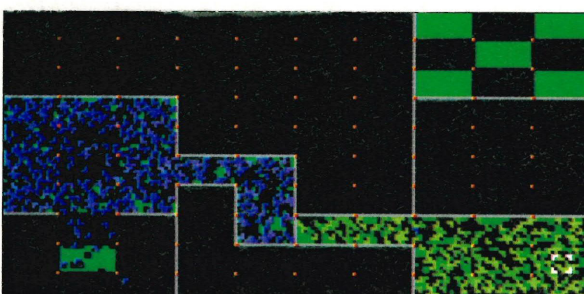


During growth it can become important to interbreed mammals and create your own species by changing certain stats

It is possible to bring up a window of statistics on how the animal population are coping. Each breed is separately shown

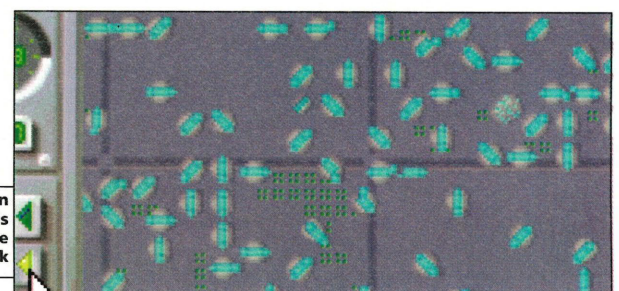


**'You hear a crackling sound like an authentic ele**  
**And if you find this disturbing, you are not alone'**

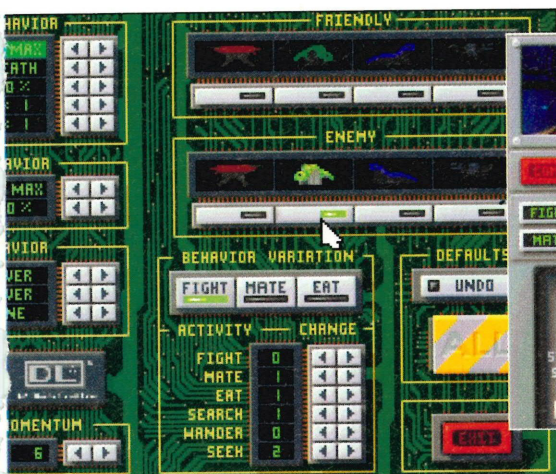


Two sub-species are about to intermingle. Simply removing the wall will set them against each other to produce a new, more advanced breed

A closer inspection of the population rate is sometimes called for. This allows you to closely watch how the animals mate, fight and talk







Configuration of animal behaviour can be further complicated by an addition of this screen

The other way to adapt your creatures is to drag out 'lifeless' samples from cold storage, give them an injection and put them into the pens. For example, if your Theroids have all got very low scores for vision, just send in a couple of dozen animals with 20:20 vision and you're away. Of course, inter-breeding can have some strange biological results and the increased level of radiation means that viruses can quickly spread through generations of troops.

**If you are on the** right track, you should arrive at the first island with two or three hundred Theroids, mostly Zips. Unfortunately, Ingrid Skinner is long gone, leaving the island almost covered with errant Theroids. Like it or not, Griggs holds you responsible and puts you in charge of a full-scale attack.

You are given plenty of equipment to complete your task. Three fast moving Sea Stallion helicopters and three troop carrying Sea Knights can be deployed on the island wherever you decide.

As soon as they have dropped their cargo they will return to base and, if necessary, can be loaded up and sent back again within minutes. As well as your Theroid army you can drop 'decoys' (little rubber Theroids which easily fool

the enemy) and 'noise' to frighten and disorientate the opposition. Better still, using a satellite uplink, you can zap your own creatures with an energy beam from outer space, temporarily boosting their faculties.

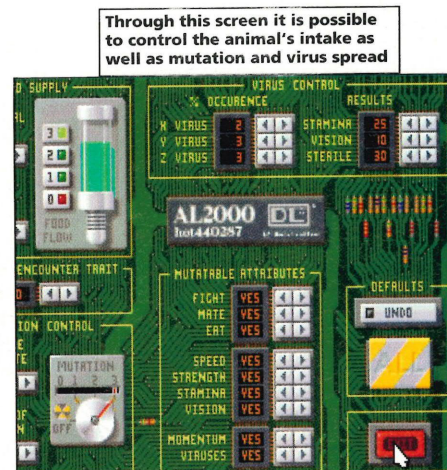
**The main distinction** between your Theroids (the good guys) and her Theroids (the baddies) is that yours are fitted with a Neural Pattern Regulator. This nifty genetic switch means that at any time during a fight your animals can be instantly 'turned off' just by pressing a button. Thrown into a torpid state, the good guys no longer present a threat to the baddies and can be left indefinitely.

The great thing about this option is that if the battle is not going well then you can get all your helicopters back to base, load them up, devise a plan of action and kick start them again when you have improved the odds. You can also drop chemically treated food into the battlefield with great precision, including drugs which are designed to

inspire increased fighting, mating and even stamina.

With all this going for you, you would be hard pushed not to reclaim the first island very quickly. But as you claim victory it is plain to see that Ingrid has moved on, from one island to another, breeding stronger and more deadly creatures as she goes. In fact, there are nine islands in all, so towards the end you will find that you'll be encountering the fourth and most gruesome kind of Theroid - The Beast, which is just as ugly as all the others, only more so.

Graphically, Unnatural Selection is functional, but smoothly drawn enough to put most 'sim' games in the shade. The 'claymation' is a gimmick which doesn't really have much impact on the gameplay, but it is an



Through this screen it is possible to control the animal's intake as well as mutation and virus spread



An example of one of the bred super creatures

## appraisal

**U**nnatural Selection is a richly varied game. The player not only gets an opportunity to tinker around with numbers and statistics, but also to carry out the strategies and tactics of a pretty sophisticated wargame. It's a little like putting together an excellent football management sim with a hands-on soccer game. If anything, the entertainment is let down by the battle sequences, which can drag on for a very long time - especially frustrating if it takes you half an hour to realise that you have no chance of winning. Also, you are fairly limited in your control over the troops and that detachment increases the frustration. Otherwise, it is worryingly addictive. First impressions told me that Unnatural Selection was the game that Jurassic Park should have been. After all, what is the subject of Michael Crichton's novel if not the dangers of tampering in Mother Nature's kitchen? However, I can't help having some reservations over the game's basic idea. It is, after all, turning large

scale vivisection into lots of fun for all the family. You have the technology to breed life into animals and yet you are forced to use that same technology to fight a war. Does that scenario sound familiar to anyone out there?

JON EWING

## second opinion

**I**f you have the patience, then you may find this game particularly interesting. Unnatural Selection is a complex affair that will need many hours of work to produce few, although worthwhile results. Everything in the game seems to have sampled sounds attached to it, including some unexplained filling-up noises produced when you increase/decrease the food supply. This suggests to me what consumes the 14Mb of disk space used. A thoroughly enjoyable 'Claymation' simulation, if you can spare an afternoon, evening and probably the rest of the week.

PAUL ASKEW

PCA SCORE

76%

## ctrocution.



## data bank

MINIMUM MEMORY  
640k

MINIMUM PROCESSOR  
386SX

OPTIMUM SPEED  
33MHz

INSTALLATION  
Essential

HARD DISK SPACE  
1.4MB

GRAPHICS  
VGA

SOUND CARDS  
Adlib, SoundBlaster

CONTROLS  
Mouse



# GABRIEL KNIGHT - SINS OF T

PUBLISHER	Sierra
CONTACT	0734 303322
TEAM	Sierra
PRICE	£39.99
RELEASE DATE	Out Now

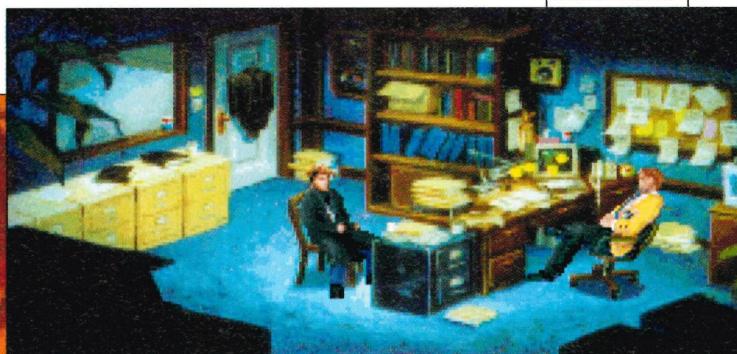
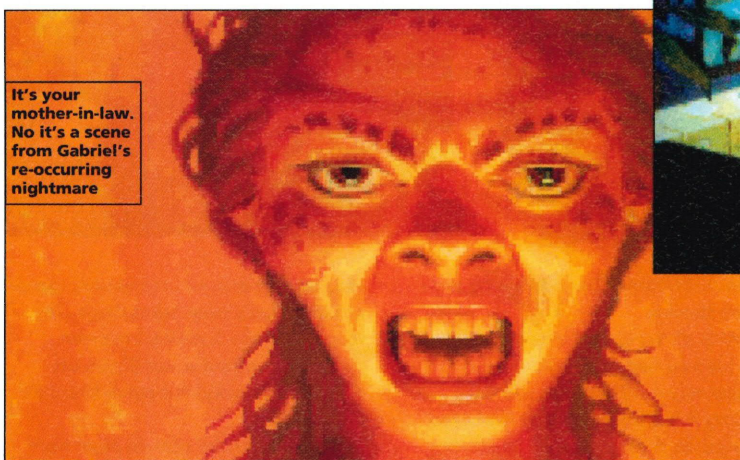
*'It is so stupid of modern civilisation to have given up believing in the devil when he is the only explanation of it.'*

FATHER RONALD KNOX 1888-1957

Mosley and Gabriel - two rude characters who become even worse in confined areas



It's your mother-in-law. No it's a scene from Gabriel's re-occurring nightmare



**Sierra are back with a new graphic adventure boasting an improved interface and complex character interaction**

Down at the local watery tavern you can find an array of people to question. Some of them may provide the clues to aid you on your way to the next section of the game

**S**ierra have become renowned for their adventure games. Gorgeous graphics and extremely atmospheric musical accompaniments set them apart from the crowd.

But when it comes to

gameplay they can often become stuck in the mud. The puzzles are all too often easy to complete, giving a child of eight little difficulty journeying from one end to the other in a couple of days.

Gabriel Knight (GK) is the latest in a long line from the Sierra factory of detailed adventures. The interface has been improved over earlier Sierra attempts, although the size of the game area has been compressed down to half. The graphics are more intense, even the music system seems to have been improved with a lovingly crafted sound track for the SoundBlaster (it's in stereo if you have a SoundBlaster Pro).

GK comes boxed with a detailed graphic novel. This is an excellent introduction to the main story detailing a demonic time many centuries ago. It must be read with utmost care before delving into the world because it gives vital clues, especially for later on in the

game. This small novelette has probably been used to save precious disk space from the dreaded Sierra introductory sequence that we all know and love.

These affairs often eat your hard drive for breakfast. Take Kings Quest 6 for example. This game is huge. The introduction alone consumes about 12Mb of space. GK on the other hand gives a brief glimpse of the novel and after Gabriel's nightmare it takes you straight into the game. It is therefore not surprising that the game consumes a mere 16Mb. Chicken feed compared to many products currently being produced.

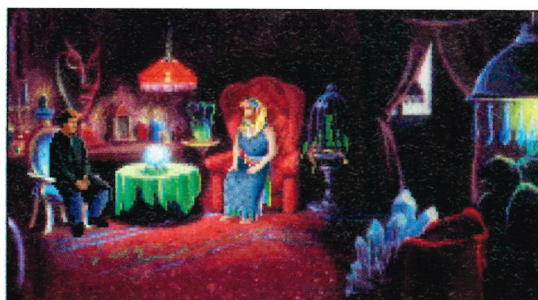
**But are these valuable**

bytes worthwhile? The simple answer should be yes but there are some grumbles about the game. There are a lot more puzzles than previous Sierra outings. More options and more interaction. And it is the latter where the game really stands out.

It is possible to talk to (almost) every character in Gabriel Knight. The interaction ranges from general chit-chat to the more intricate interrogations where Gabriel takes out his tape recorder and asks a person a variety of far-reaching questions. It is these conversations that can often carry vital clues to the game. Without some of these, it is impossible



An artist in the park. Could he help you in a reconstruction?

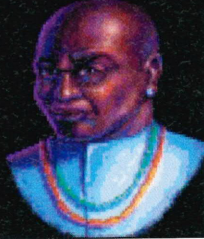


Get your palm read and discover some interesting voodoo magic



# HE FATHER

Ask About:  
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 Voodoo Murders  
 New Orleans  
 St. John's Eve  
 Cabrit Sans Cor  
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 Voodoo  
 Exit



Two way interrogations are an important part of Gabriel Knight. Here we find the main lead talking to Dr. John, an interesting character who may hold some vital information on voodoo origins

to continue or discover a new location.

This interaction can also be seen as its failing. It can become confusing talking to about 10 or so characters in different locations only to find out at a later date that you didn't ask a certain character a specific question.

**A further grumble** about these interrogation techniques is met when you have to constantly ask the same person the same question up to eight times. Monotonous could be used to describe this situation. However monotonous may be too harsh a word to use because although the conversations are long winded they can be interesting, particularly with respect to voodoo and its origins.

It doesn't end there either. Each location can have a variety of items to view, touch or move. One of the first things you can do is operate a step-ladder to attempt to look down the blouse of your secretary. Of course doing so will result in a highly witty remark from her.

Again there is a down side to this. To

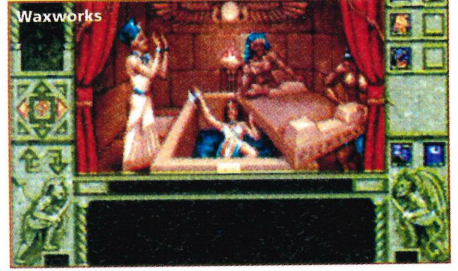
use an object on screen you have to be near pixel perfect in cursor positioning. That is, every time you want to use or view something and the cursor isn't within the exact area of the object then a message will appear rudely telling you that the object doesn't exist or another reply which is just as profound.

This doesn't help when trying to solve some of the puzzles. A lot of the solutions are so obscure you will kick yourself when you realise just how simple something really is. Would you think that having a Mime follow you would distract a policeman's attention so you could get on his radio set? Then again, when you do understand what is happening and can follow the flow of the plot you will be able to breeze through the game without using much of your grey matter.

Some of the most striking things about GK and most Sierra adventures are the richly detailed graphics. However these can often turn the game into a tortuous battle where locations that have animated back-drops turn Gabriel and the surrounding cast into the latest film on slow motion replay. Even on a 486-33 this was slow, even with the game speed turned on maximum.

## déjà-vu

**W**axworks is another adventure game with a Gothic horror slant to it. Littered with some much disgustingly vivid pictures of severed body parts, it's cast in the same mould as the macabre circumstances found in Gabriel Knight. However, the gameplay turns out to be virtually non-existent with the title selling heavily merely on the basis of these pixelised delights. Infogrames' **Alone in the Dark 1 and II** and also **Shadow of the Comet** draw on a surreal horror feel to give both games depth and atmosphere. Rather than using a point and click interface, AITD2 allows the player to directly control the main character. Now in its second incarnation this game contains some excellent graphical detail with the main character and crew all being animated with 3D polygon graphics.

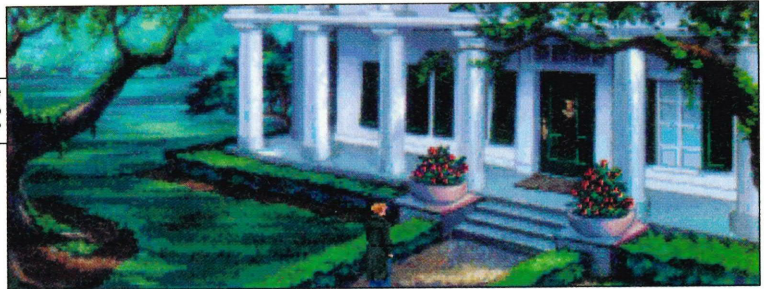


Here is a local area map of the French section of New Orleans where you live..



...and here is the main map of the area. As we can see there are a number of places to visit here as well

Outside this respectable establishment, but who does it belong to?



Similar to the graphics, the sound is rich, almost orchestral and even on the SoundBlaster and Pro the music is produced with excellent quality. Instead of receiving a gentle fade in of one track while the other gracefully moves out,

the music changes as if a jump had been made on a CD. It draws you further and further into the mystery with a gripping sense of realism and by the end of the review several people round the office were quietly whistling away some of the

tracks. The niggling thing about the central character, Gabriel Knight, ▶



At the crime scene of a recent murder are some interesting markings that may aid you later on

**'Some of the most striking things about Gabriel are the richly detailed graphics'**



# GABRIEL KNIGHT

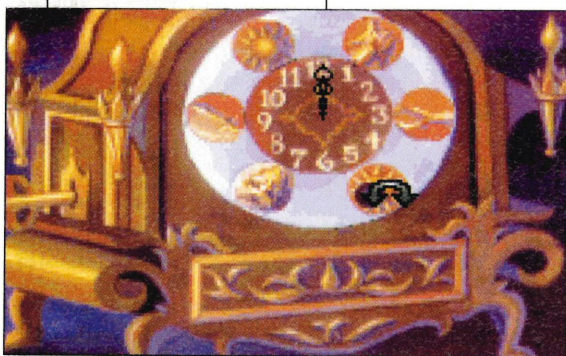


► is the fact that he is so damn rude, so Americanised. He is a male as viewed by many females, including the writer who is in fact a female herself.

**He looks at himself** fondly in the mirror and thinks very highly of himself when chatting to women. He is also rude and obnoxious particularly when meeting his friend Detective Mosley. When these two characters meet it is like chalk and cheese. The insults between them fly thick and fast, containing the occasional vulgarity. This also carries on through the game with many other characters using the odd four letter word.

Perhaps this part of the character is a bit too overt for anyone's taste. A prime example is every time he visits his grandmother he greets her with a fond

Somewhere along the line you will find this valuable clock whose dials may be moved for certain reasons

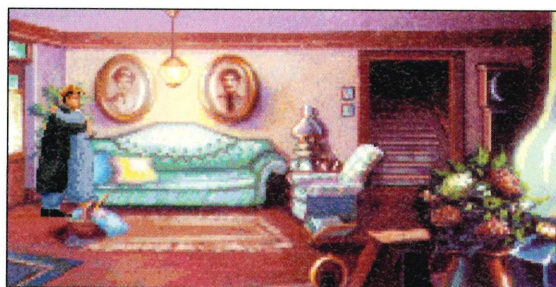


Everyone has a wish, here Gabriel is using a wishing stone to try and make things come true

cuddle which is equalled everytime he leaves by an emotional farewell. Do many people do that in real life? Unless of course you believe all of the U.S. shows you see on television.

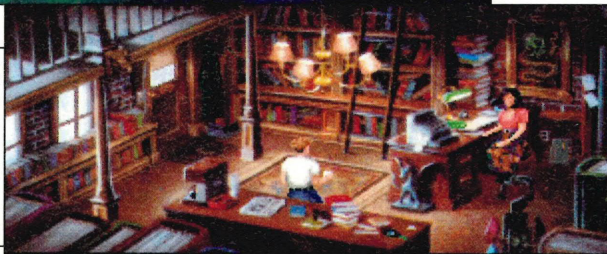
Still, if you are looking for a near gothic game that dabbles delicately into the nightmare world of the occult and voodooism then this adventure will suffice. The puzzles are pretty simple with the occasional brain teaser that will keep you stumped for a couple of hours, if not days. But the depth of the story is intriguing and adds an exciting if mystical atmosphere to the game, something that many recent titles from the Sierra stable seem to have missed.

It will be interesting to see and hear the CD-Rom version of the game. Judging by the credits they have actually managed to obtain some pretty famous hollywood people for the games characters. Look out for the PC Action review in the future.



The first day of the adventure so there must be some serious investigation to take place

First things first, you must get out of bed and search your flat. Then go shopping, ensuring that you take time to talk to your lovely assistant

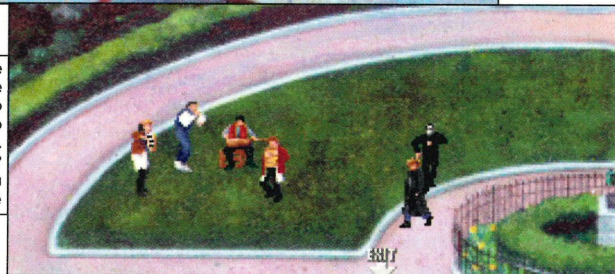


"Gee, you're lively. Did you have another nightmare last night?"



After the shop go to the Police Station and recover the photographs that Detective Mosley has set aside for you

Next go to the park and entice the Mime to follow you to the policeman. What next? We'll let you decide



Quick get the hankies out as Gabriel says au revoir grand-mama to his little princess

## appraisal

**G**othic and horror are a great combination to many, take Stephen King as an example. While it may have been hard to combine these into a computer game, the end result is worth waiting for, particularly the atmosphere created by the music. However some of the puzzles are extremely difficult to solve. Sometimes too much so, although this can be rectified by simply moving over a particular part of a location. For example I became very frustrated early on in the game because I was getting nowhere. Angrily I started clicking the Look icon frantically over the screen when low and behold the magic point scoring system was heard. I had advanced

further because of some unadulterated fluke. The interrogation system can become tedious too, mainly because you have to ask several people a large number of questions over and over again. Although deemed as the gripping part of the game this is where the product actually does fall apart and begins to get monotonous. However having said all that, it is an enjoyable adventure that has continually captivated me for over a number of weeks now.

PAUL ASKEW

## second opinion

**T**his adventure relies heavily on the central character who gives his name to the game, so if you can't be doing with a cocky, chauvinist, vain and offensive brat,

then this won't be your cup of Malibu. Talking of Malibu, you can just imagine some voodoo priestess saying, 'Hell no girl, that man was no good for you anyway' about our friend Gabriel. Still, the plot is intriguing, the presentation pleasing, and includes some clever switches to different screens. In interrogation mode, Gabriel is shown head to head with his interviewees, with a close up of Gabriel's film star features, a pubescent girl's delight. With a well detailed voodoo background, it's a shame that this epic scale adventure falls flat on its face in its attempts to be hip and up to date. I love the comic book that comes with the package, but this sort of writing is better in print at the moment.

DAVID LONGWORTH

PCA SCORE **78%**

## data bank

MINIMUM MEMORY  
580+2MB

MINIMUM PROCESSOR  
386

OPTIMUM SPEED  
40

INSTALLATION  
Essential

HARD DISK SPACE  
16MB

GRAPHICS  
VGA

SOUND CARDS  
Roland, SoundBlaster, Adlib

CONTROLS  
Joystick, Mouse, Keyboard



# PINBALL FANTASIES

**PUBLISHER** 21st C. Entertainment  
**CONTACT** 0235 851 852  
**TEAM** Frontline  
**PRICE** £37.99  
**RELEASE DATE** 14th February

*'Life isn't all beer and skittles; but beer and skittles, or something better of the same sort, must form part of every Englishman's education'*  
 THOMAS HUGHES 1822-1896

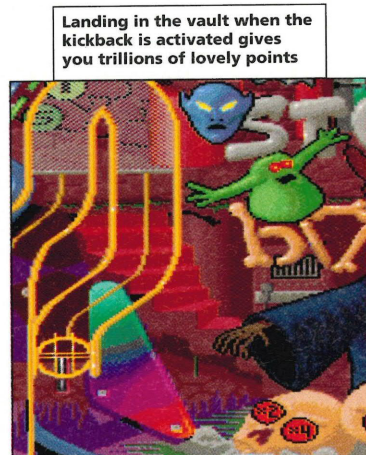
**Ever since I was a young boy I played the silver ball... back in those days we didn't have all these fancy computers**

If you were to fantasise about playing pinball, it would probably look something like the follow up to Pinball Dreams. OK, so Pinball is hardly the stuff that dreams are made of, much less fantasies, but from the little pub table to the arcade extravaganza, there has always been an imaginative flair to table design. The four designs that make up Fantasies cover the big escapist pursuits of the present day.

The three designers known as Frontline have called on the appeal of the fairground, the game show, the Grand Prix and the ghost story in adorning their tables, while they have adapted these with great ingenuity to include all the usual ramps and loops. Although the four delightful designs wouldn't wow you in an arcade full of tables, they do prove to be incredibly addictive in their simplicity.

**Sending your silver ball** round chutes leading over the top of the main play area earns you rides at the fairground or prizes in the game show, miles on the road or screams(!) in the haunted house. Various letters scattered around two of the tables are lit to open doors or change gears. Drop through letters offer similar rewards, while putting the ball into basket-type mouths and vaults gets you a jackpot, cash prize

Ride the cyclone, but make sure you don't PUKE. Yes, that horrible word up in lights.



Landing in the vault when the kickback is activated gives you trillions of lovely points

or spin of the wheel, all amounting to more points. Pity there isn't more to it than scoring points, millions and millions of them, high scores and uncountable figures worth of points, but hey, that's pinball for you.

However if you are looking for the ultimate pinball simulator you'll be disappointed. For a start, the computer could never replace the table unless the whole thing was on screen at once, instead of scrolling round after the ball. The scrolling may indeed be silky smooth and the ball movement totally realistic, but at times the engine is just a bit too efficient and your ball can disappear between your two flippers almost before the screen has scrolled round to it.

Go through the pits and take the off road route for a x2 - x8 score

## appraisal

Too realistic to be a fantasy and certainly too simple to be the last word in pinball, this is more like a masterly Shakespeare play, setting the standards by which everything else must be judged. It's an impressive achievement to have so ably converted the Amiga classic so that it can

be played on a 286 with music and graphics intact. Difficulty level is such that the four tables will support hours of enjoyable gameplay and high score competition. It's that addictive that sometimes it is hard to drag yourself away, so 'scuse me I need another fix.

DAVE LONGWORTH

PCA SCORE **87%**



Billion game show: Light the prizes and then scoot round the outside to spin the billion dollar wheel

In the realism stakes, the table tilt button is a definite plus, making the ball fly out of the crack where it is stuck or nudging it down the right channel. But if you apply too much force, the alarm goes off and the flippers are disabled, just like the real thing. And even better than the real thing, you don't have an irate landlord coming over and giving you the boot.

**The flippers look and** sound like moving parts and the sound effects ping purposefully, though if they were really going for that near as damn it realism, then the ball could sound more metallic. You can angle the table to what must be ridiculously steep gradients, judging by the speed the ball moves, though to be fair this bionic pace takes the game of pinball to a manic dimension unobtainable in the friction-laden real world.

The true test of a simulation is to consider how it makes you feel and compare that feeling with the real thing. And the

number of people who play Fantasies grasping the corners of their desk, slamming the buttons and tilting their PC on end is certainly proof enough of this sim's worth.

And if you think you are playing on a real table, it will be no surprise to see the number match up for a replay and the digitised display at the bottom of the screen or hear the atmospheric chimes on the haunted house table and revving engine on the race track.

## data bank

**MINIMUM MEMORY**  
530k

**MINIMUM PROCESSOR**  
286

**OPTIMUM SPEED**  
33MHz

**INSTALLATION**  
Essential

**HARD DISK SPACE**  
4MB

**GRAPHICS**  
VGA

**SOUND CARDS**  
Roland, SoundBlaster, Adlib

**CONTROLS**  
Keyboard

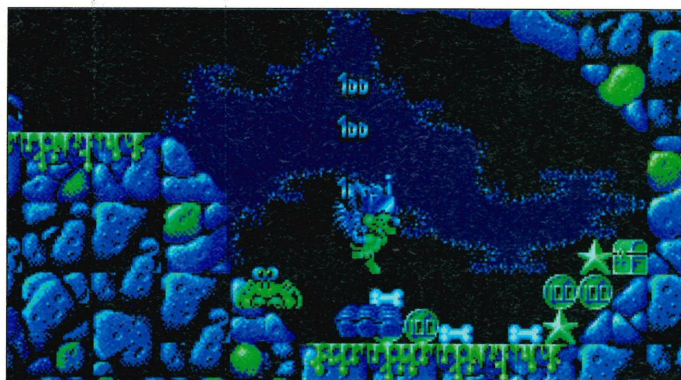


# FIRE AND ICE

PUBLISHER	Renegade
CONTACT	071 481 9214
TEAM	Graftgold
PRICE	£31.99
RELEASE DATE	Out Now

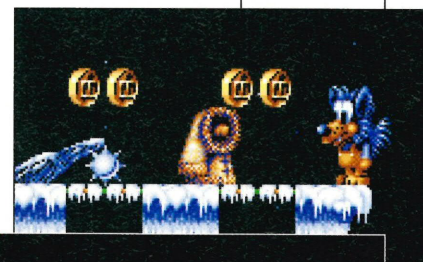
*'Man is the animal that has made friends with the fire'*

HENRY VAN DYKE,  
AMERICAN CLERGYMAN, AUTHOR



The underwater sections of Fire and Ice contain the game's most impressive scenery

Collect the spinning golden coins in order to amass an impressive points total



Cool appears to have been caught out by the fluffy bunnies and scary spider

*He's as cool as a cucumber and just about the hottest thing in town. Yes, Cool Coyote arrives on the PC in a storm of fire and ice.*

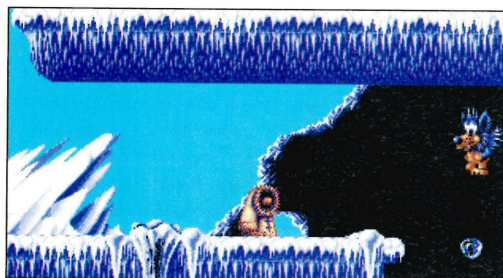
It was approximately 18 months ago that Fire and Ice and Cool Coyote first appeared on the home computer market. This impressive debut was greeted with great respect at the time. To be fair though there were a few negative comments arising from the fact that platformers were becoming a pretty turgid genre, and Fire and Ice did nothing to propel this type of game into any sort of new and exciting areas.

Now, a good year and a half later, PC owners are being treated to their very own conversion. The story revolves around an intergalactic evil-doer named

Suten, who has escaped from a lifetime's incarceration to the warm climes of the Earth's tropics. For the general good and well-being of the Universe, the bad guy cannot be allowed to run amok for long. Law and order is therefore represented by Glemm who is in charge of returning Suten to his rightful place behind bars.

**The only problem** which faces our intergalactic troubleshooter is that he is personally known by Suten and will therefore never be allowed to get close enough to his quarry to capture him. So, Glemm is forced to scour the Earth for an ally who is willing to carry out the mission on his behalf.

Unfortunately all seems lost, as the inhabitants of Earth seem either too cowardly or slow-witted to be able to complete the task successfully, and



Cool Coyote leaps high into the air, watched by a startled hooded eskimo

Glemm is just about to give up in despair when he hears the dulcet canine tones of a Coyote ringing out across the icy desolation of the North Pole.

Such harmonious vocal talent could only belong to someone or something who is both brave and clever enough to tackle Suten single handedly and save the Universe. The voice belongs to Cool Coyote and the mission begins.

**Things start with** CC leaving the comfort of his igloo in order to search out and follow his quarry to all four corners of the world. By guiding Cool around his frostbound home with either a joystick or the keyboard, you must help our hero collect six parts of a key which have been deposited for safekeeping with one of Suten's evil minions.

In order for Cool to collect each part of the key, he must first immobilize the relevant nasty by casting him in a block

of ice and then walking over the petrified figure, thereby pocketing the relevant item.

Once all six parts of the key have been collected, it is then a simple task to locate the magic door which should then transport Cool to the next level.

This process must be repeated over a number of different countries of varying climates, which include not only the North Pole, but also the sweltering African Jungle and an underwater world where Cool is forced to employ some pretty nifty looking scuba gear.

It sounds like pretty standard platform fare, and to a certain extent, it is. What saves Fire and Ice from becoming just another platformer, is the appeal of the central character sprite, who you can't help but feel attached to after only a short stint at the controls. But more than this, the downright playability of the thing is a joy to behold.

**'The downright playability of the thing is a joy to behold'**



Some of the character sprites tend to get a little lost in the background of the jungle

## appraisal

Fire and Ice can best be described as an addictive, playable and well presented platform game, and PC owners could do a lot worse than throw their money in the general direction of Cool Coyote and his mentors. Having said this however, it must be pointed out that there is nothing new on show in Fire and Ice and some game buyers may wish to look elsewhere for fresh ideas. After all, when everything is said and done, the game is over 18 months old, and to be honest, things have moved on significantly in the intervening time.

NEIL JACKSON

PCA SCORE **77%**

## data bank

MINIMUM MEMORY  
640k

MINIMUM PROCESSOR  
286

OPTIMUM SPEED  
16MHz

INSTALLATION  
Essential

HARD DISK SPACE  
1MB

GRAPHICS  
VGA, EGA

SOUND CARDS  
Adlib, Roland, SoundBlaster

CONTROLS  
Keyboard, Joystick



E&OE

**RECYCLED BLANK  
DS/DD (LOW)**



# OMAR SHARIFF'S BRIDGE CHAMPION

**PUBLISHER** Oxford Softworks  
**CONTACT** 0993 823 463  
**TEAM** In House  
**PRICE** £39.99  
**RELEASE DATE** Out Now

**I**t's all about partnerships, contracts and subterfuge, the most subtle and refined card game for four players. But when it's you and the computer against the computer, with Omar Sharif commenting, some of that subtlety has to be lost.

This version does let you link across a network, which beats playing the real thing when it's sometimes pretty hard to find four willing and able bridge enthusiasts.

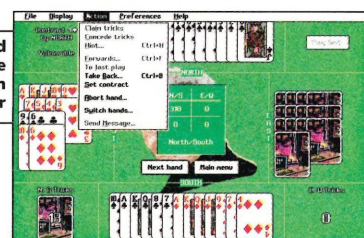
Oxford Softworks' bridge engine, in development for 10 years, is one of the few not to 'cheat' and take a peek at your cards. This does lead to your mechanical mate on the opposite side of the compass making some horrendous plays, but I guess in the long run this is much fairer.

**The problem with** any computer participation in this sort of game is making sure the rules and conventions you and your partner follow are the same. Ideally partnerships should be built up over several years, with both sides understanding the undercurrent of the bidding.

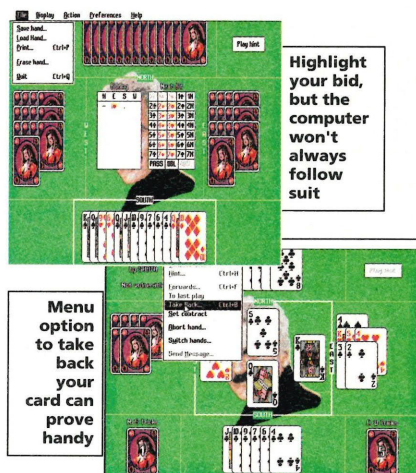
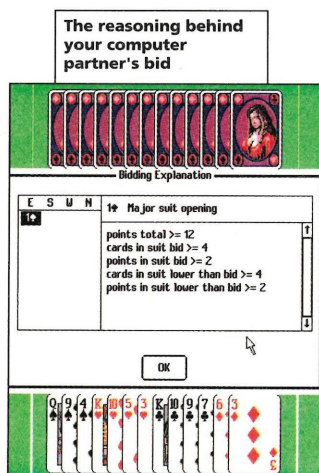
Bridge Champion has a huge array of bidding conventions built in, with the opportunity to customise your own, and it successfully caters for novices and experts alike. It is more the place to learn and practice your bridge than to actually play. But it is certainly a winner in my books.

DAVE LONGWORTH **77%**

Change the card backs, the table top design, even Omar's voiceover



**Bidding in the auction for a contract, count up your honours and singletons and play those tricks. Over to Omar...**



## data bank

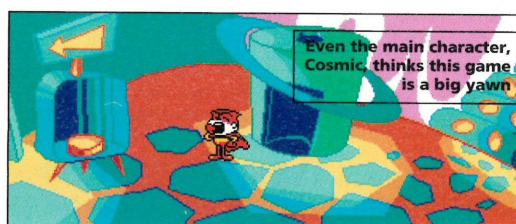
<b>MINIMUM MEMORY</b>
560k
<b>MINIMUM PROCESSOR</b>
286
<b>OPTIMUM SPEED</b>
16MHz
<b>INSTALLATION</b>
Essential
<b>HARD DISK</b>
7MB
<b>GRAPHICS</b>
EGA, VGA, Super VGA
<b>SOUND CARDS</b>
Roland, SoundBlaster, Adlib, Pro Audio Spectrum
<b>CONTROLS</b>
Mouse

# COSMIC SPACEHEAD

**PUBLISHER** Codemasters  
**CONTACT** 0926 814 132  
**TEAM** Supersonic  
**PRICE** £29.99  
**RELEASE DATE** Out Now

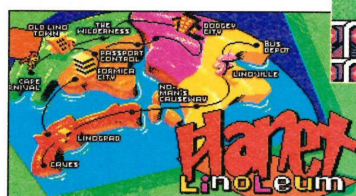
**That cheeky little cosmic chappy comes down to earth from the consoles for more wackiness. What a spacehead!**

**H**aving previously crash-landed on Earth, Cosmic (you) has returned to his home planet, Linoleum. Instead of a hero's welcome for discovering such a magnificent Galaxy as ours, Cosmic is greeted only with disbelief, for he has no proof of his findings. He has no choice but to return to Earth.



One of the numerous arcade sections. So hard, you'll find your dog playing it with ease

There is a two player option if you are really desperate



This is the entire map for the game. Looks quite big, but perhaps not

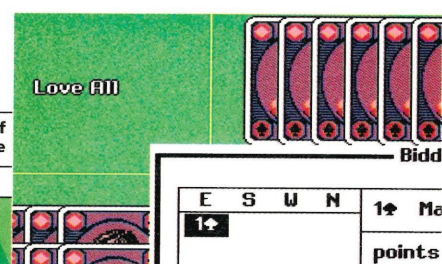
linking these together are even worse arcade parts.

**In these sections,** Cosmic wanders round under your complete control and must jump over awkwardly large aliens and, well, that is pretty much that.

About the only one that's difficult to complete first time round is the secret maze. But it soon becomes obvious how to get through to the other side.

This sort of wacky, primitive tomfoolery is fine on the consoles but we expect more from the PC. Maybe next time.

PAUL ASKEW **50%**

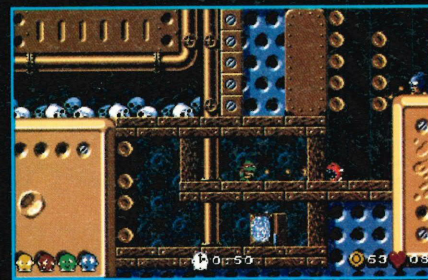
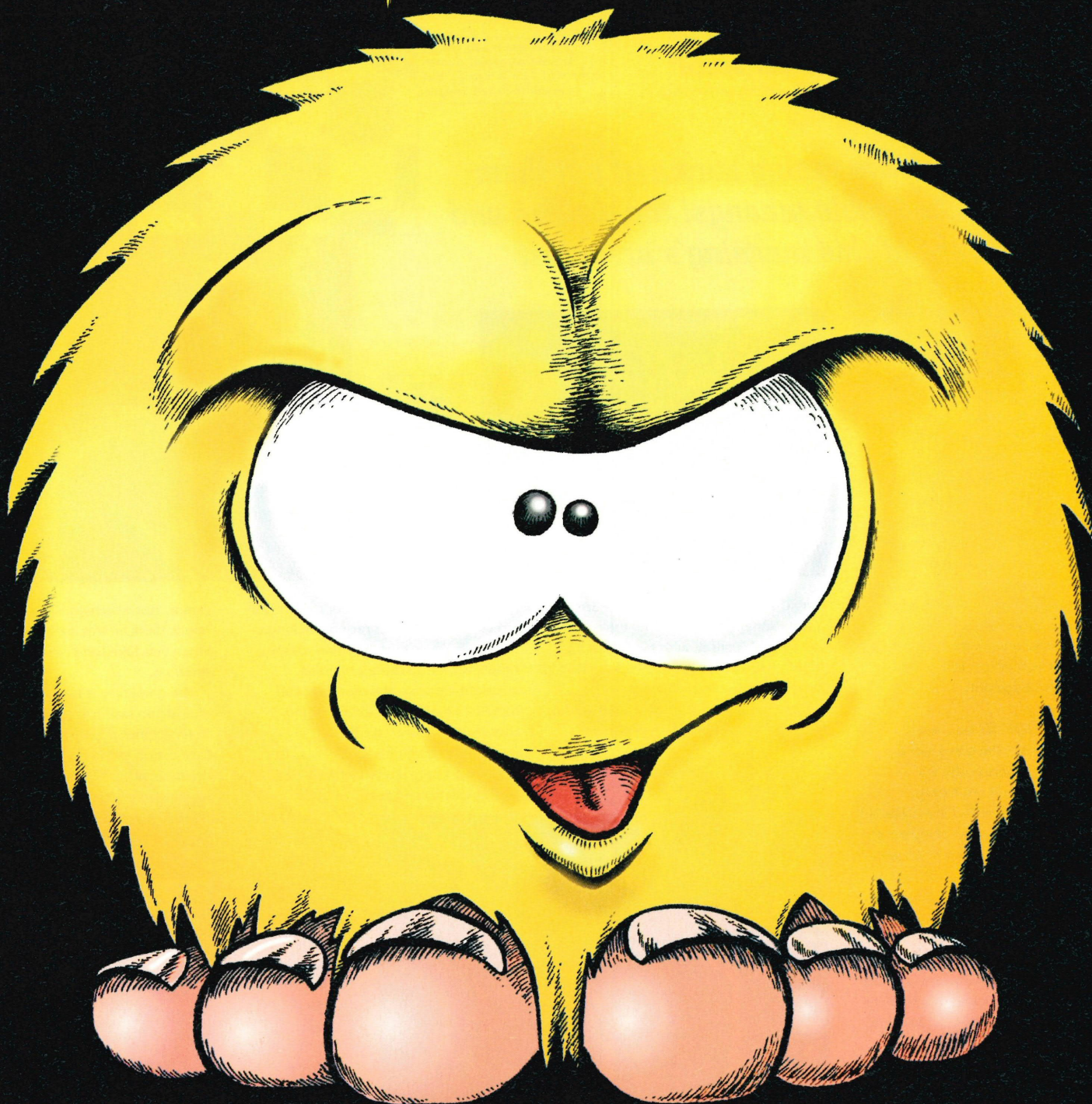


## data bank

<b>MINIMUM MEMORY</b>
640k
<b>MINIMUM PROCESSOR</b>
386
<b>OPTIMUM SPEED</b>
16 Hz
<b>INSTALLATION</b>
Essential
<b>HARD DISK SPACE</b>
2.8MB
<b>GRAPHICS</b>
EGA, VGA
<b>SOUND CARDS</b>
Adlib, SoundBlaster
<b>CONTROLS</b>
Joystick, Keyboard



# FURY Of The FURRIES



Manual in English, Manuel en français, Handbuch auf deutsch, Manuale in italiano, Manual en español

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Published By





# MICROMACHINES

PUBLISHER	Codemasters
CONTACT	0926 814132
TEAM	Big Red
PRICE	£29.99
RELEASE DATE	Feb '93

*'In skating  
over thin ice,  
our safety is  
in our speed'*

R.W. EMERSON 1803-1882

**Honey I shrunk the racing cars and put them on the breakfast table amongst the waffles and other leftovers of this morning's breakfast**

It's every little boy's favourite game, racing toy cars around the house while their little sisters play with their dolls. Indeed countless toys and comics through the ages have been cashing in on men's fascination with their cars.

So when Codemasters miniaturised the idea for the consoles, it was no surprise that the chequered flags were flying at full mast. 'Arguably the best race game ever written,' they said, 'one of the best and most original games ever'. 'Probably the most playable game I've ever seen on the Mega Drive'. The superlatives were really flowing and the percentages very high for both Micro Machine's playability and originality.

**But there has to** be a question mark over whether the game can appeal to older gamers in this PC conversion. The levels are highly inventive everyday scenes – the breakfast table, bathtub, pool table – the sorts of places we raced our toy cars when we were kids. And that's part of the answer, being able to chuckle at the scenario, as you zoom past a pencil sharpener or piece of chalk on a desk left over from your childhood.

Then there are the characters, a whole portrait gallery full of ugly mug shots of teenage tearaways waiting to jump into the driving seat of that powerboat or helicopter as it revs up at the starter's orders. They're a politically correct bunch of kids, a token Chinese named Able Chen, the Asians Fab Bonnie and Slick Jethro, the Spaniard Wild Emilio and



One player can opt for head to head or the full race challenge, the latter giving the full circuits

fatty Dire Walter. But for me Ace Spider is the winner every time – he looks more like a Nigel Mansell with his shades and chunky jacket than spoddy-looking Fair Anne or punky Smooth Joel.

Once these guys are behind the wheel – and all the options are there from

Tearing round the workbench, you can knock the other driver off the course, to gain the lead



head to head beat the other car off the screen to full four car racing challenge – the gameplay is pure mayhem. Despite simple accelerate/decelerate and left/right controls, the machines still handle beautifully, skidding round corners and bouncing off uncompromising obstacles.

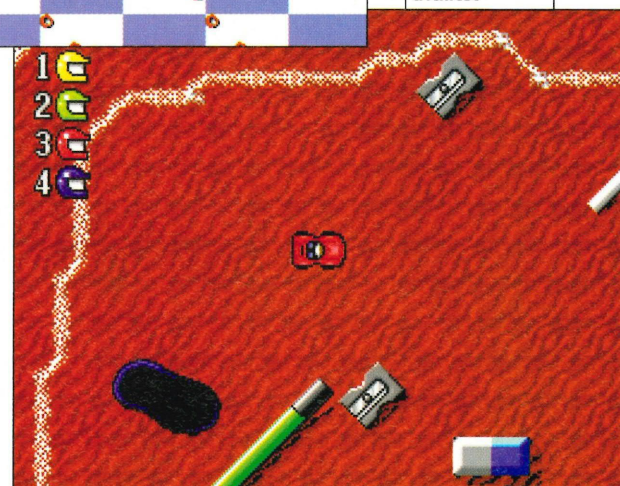
The tracks are strewn with oil patches, marmalade splodges and loads of

bubbles, to slow you down or send you careering off the edge of the table into oblivion. Corners can be cut, but you have to slalom through the pencil sharpener obstacles and carefully cross the bridges made of rulers and ring binder



Tracks are made out of breakfast cereal, which may look like Wheetos, but is actually called Toppos

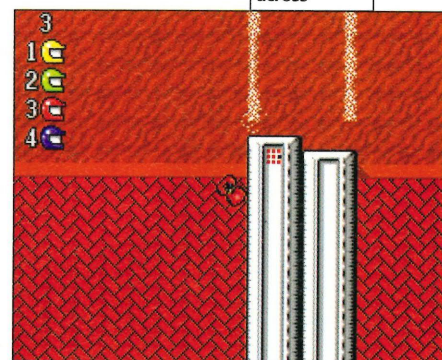
The sports cars are the smoothest machines available, but the course is also one of the trickiest



ramps. Just watching the game, you might think all this is child's play, but when you take the hot seat, you'll soon grow up.

The gameplay is fast and hectic – almost too fast in fact as the machines practically take off on the lowest speed settings. The two player games can provide hours of fun, literally. They get very competitive and tend to

Crossing the bridge made of rulers is pretty tricky, especially as all the computer controlled cars just go straight across

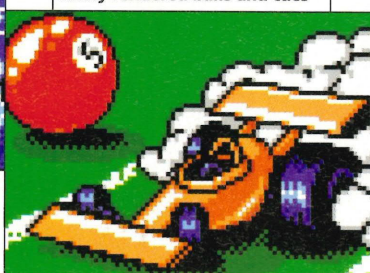


The choice of eight modes of transport and courses is part of the attraction of this racing sim. The various machines handle very differently. The helicopter delicately climbs the drainpipe, the sports car tears round the course and the four by four is more deliberate. The power boat, appearing in the qualifying round, skims the surface of the water deftly, while the warrior and the tank are made for reckless road bullies



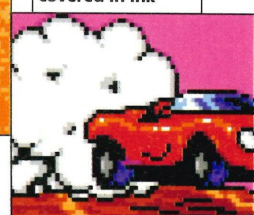
Power boat: What do you get up to in the bath? Racing toy boats under bars of soap and around rubber ducks and avoiding sliding out of control in all the bubble bath?

Formula 1: These serious racing cars tear around the not so serious pool table, avoiding the nicely rendered balls and cues

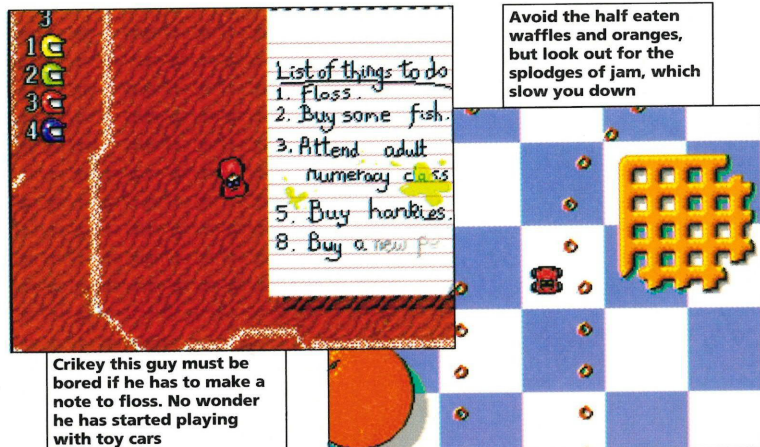


Turbo wheels: Fun in the sand pit. Put down your bucket and spade and race round the dunes and the sand castles

Sports car: Bored with homework, you turn to playing with your toy cars and try not to get them covered in ink







## déjà-vu

For déjà-vu read jamais-vu. There has never been a game quite like this, though there are plenty of racing sims out there. **Indycar Racing**, the sequel to **Indy 500** is generally considered to be the best of a bunch of fast moving, smooth scrolling, realistic-view track testers. Stuntsters like **4D Sports Driving Classic** and **Stunt Driver** feature corkscrew loops, bridges and various obstacles, but the basic track remains uninspiring. Gremlin's **Lotus** allows you to create your own track, but you'd have to be a genius to come up with anything resembling Micro's imaginative playtime frolics.



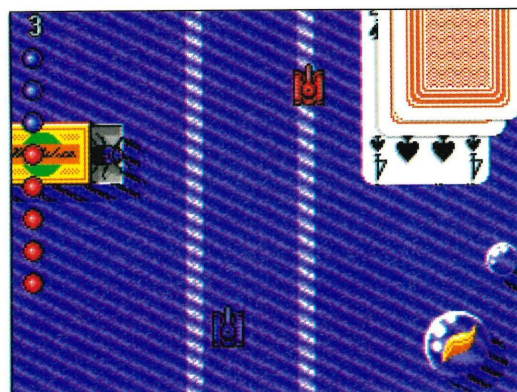
# 'Turns the most cautious driver into a swearing lunatic'

turn the most cautious driver who stays on the rails and slows down at corners into a swearing lunatic, bouncing his opponent off the course. It's such a malleable concept. The tables are all laid out, but what you actually do with them and how many different styles of game you encounter is entirely up to you.

**The refinements** don't make the game, but they do add to the fun, the little pops as you bump into bits of breakfast cereal or the whoosh sound as you plough through the sand past the bucket and spade. And when racing the tanks you can fire shells at your opponent to knock them off the track. In fact you would be well advised to cheat as the computer car can actually shift faster than you can.

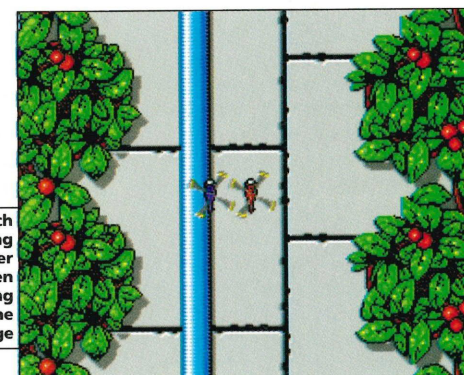
But what sets the game apart is the background. It's high definition, delightfully well drawn and incredibly inventive and, surprisingly, the engine very capably scrolls around this luxurious landscape at high speed.

So for the kid in all of us, and that includes PC gamers, these machines could just provide that nostalgic trip back to our childhood racing dreams.



All high tech now, driving your helicopter up the garden wall, climbing among the foliage

Must have lost your marbles, playing on the card table, while someone is trying to have a game of poker



## appraisal

**t**his is to standard racing sims what American stock car racing is to Formula One, totally manic mayhem. Free-wheeling fun for all the family, it has an appeal across the board for racing enthusiasts and heathens alike. The simple set-up and controls belie a complexity of gameplay which is instantly appealing and completely addictive in the long run. A worthy addition to any PC games collection, even if it might stick out like a wacky Zappa (RIP) record in a collection of classic albums.

DAVID LONGWORTH

## second opinion

**b**ased on the tiny dinky toys of the same name, **Micromachines** is a simple racing game which works really well. If you're looking for a game with pure addictiveness programmed in and top playability then look no further because **Micromachines** is here. The graphics are nice and colourful and don't distort in any way when you're in a high speed chase around the bath tub or in the sand pit. Definitely a front runner on the gaming grid.

GLEN URQUHART

PCA SCORE **90%**

## data bank

MINIMUM MEMORY  
640k

MINIMUM PROCESSOR  
286

OPTIMUM SPEED  
25MHz

INSTALLATION  
Optional

HARD DISK SPACE  
700K

GRAPHICS  
VGA

SOUND CARDS  
Adlib, PBA

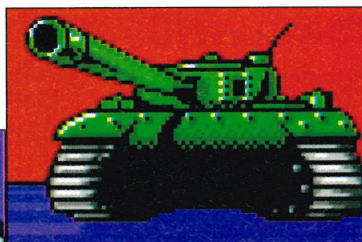
CONTROLS  
Mouse, Keyboard, Joystick



Four by Four: Race around the breakfast table. Avoid waffles and oranges and getting stuck in the splodges of marmalade



Warrior: A heavy but good vehicle, which races around a workshop bench and avoids skidding in the serious oil slicks spilled all over the place



Tank: What the tank is doing on the gambling table, I don't know, but you're just not interested in playing blackjack right now



Helicopter: Probably the weakest of the machines - it looks a bit pathetic as it climbs up the ivy by the drainpipe in the back garden



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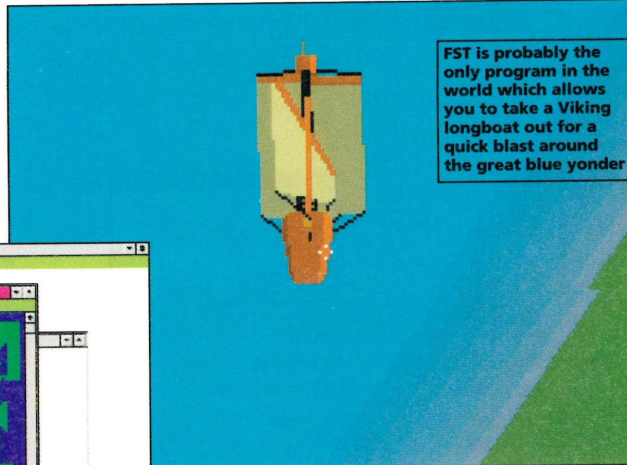
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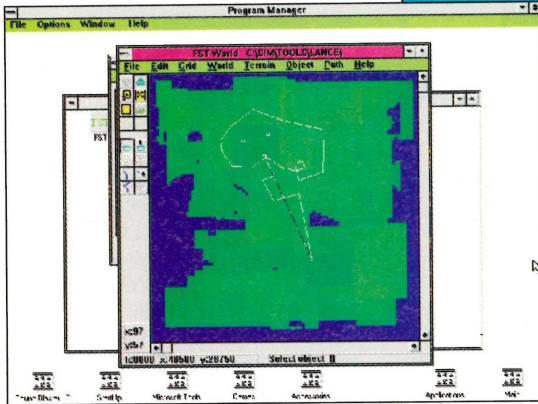
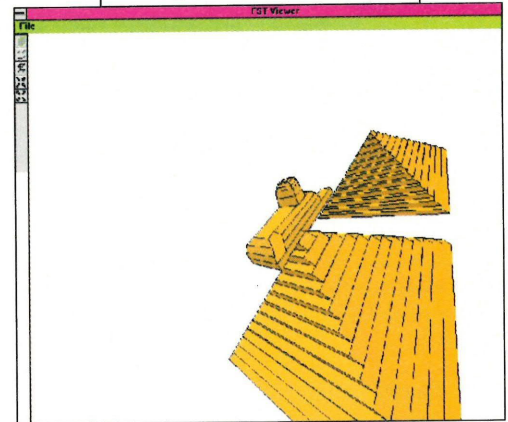


# FLIGHT SIM TOOLKIT

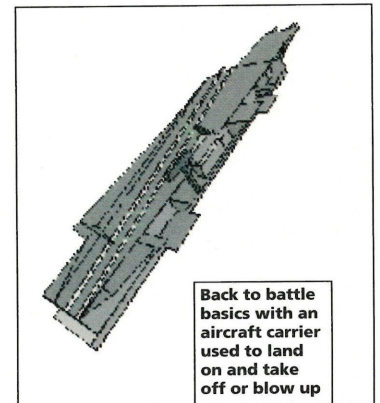
**PUBLISHER** Domark  
**CONTACT** 081 780 2224  
**TEAM** Simis  
**PRICE** £49.99  
**RELEASE DATE** Now



There are plenty of objects to load in including some rather famous ones



The World Editor can be used to assign paths for planes to follow and routes for supply vehicles moving from depots to hangars, anti aircraft units and so on



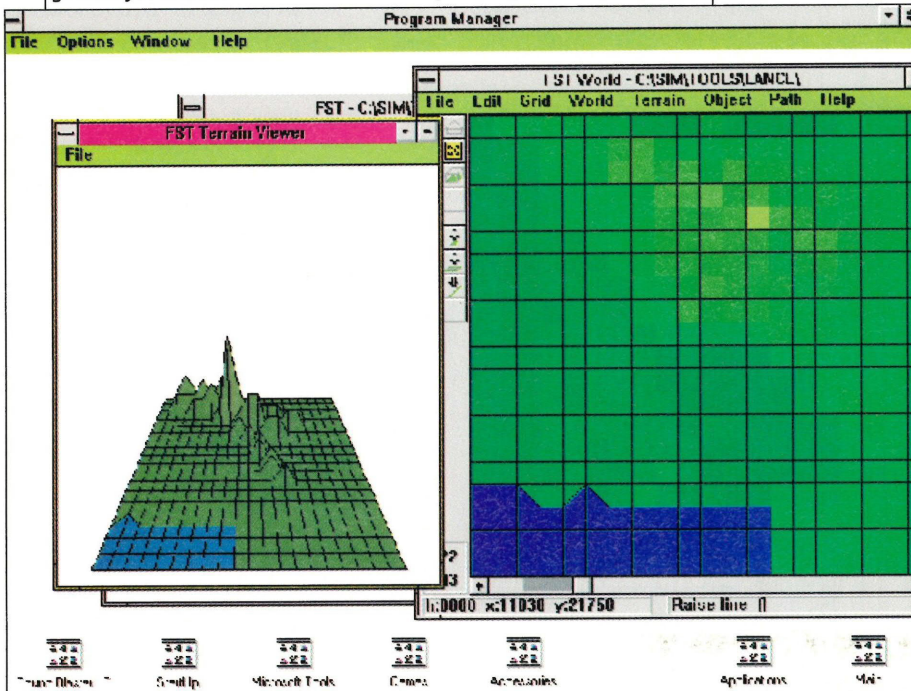
Back to battle basics with an aircraft carrier used to land on and take off or blow up

Having brought joy to millions with *3D Construction Kit 2* and *AV8B Harrier Assault*, those purveyors of polygons, Domark, once again bestow the power of creation upon the masses

*'Loaded like a freight train, Flyin' like an aeroplane, Feelin' like a space brain, One more time tonight'*

NIGHTRAIN, FROM THE ALBUM APPETITE FOR DESTRUCTION BY GUNS AND ROSES

The Terrain Editor allows you to create a great contoured 3D landscape to fly over and the Viewer will give you a better idea of how it will appear in the game. If you don't like it then make a few simple changes here and there



The Shape Editor includes a feature which allows you to see what your object will look like in the finished game. Unfortunately you can't rotate it or do anything to it because Windows can't handle the graphics properly

Before we dive headfirst into the wild and dangerous world of the Flight Sim Toolkit, it's probably best to warn you that it is a difficult and complex development tool to get to grips with. This totally

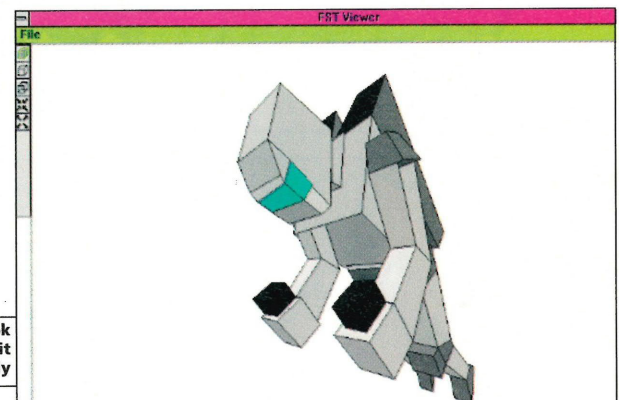
contradicts the manual which makes it all sound so simple and so easy to use.

First of all you create a landscape and then you fill it with a whole pile of objects. Each object in this world has various attributes assigned to it which define its behaviour in the finished simulator. All

you have to do is decide where to put the things and tell them how to behave. You see, nice and easy.

I should point out at this point that FST's major failing is that it's a Windows only program, although the flight sims it produces can be run from Dos. As we all know Windows is terrible and things might have worked much better if the package could have been run from Dos.

To a certain extent the process of bunging together a complete playable simulation is relatively straightforward. The way it works is like this, the main flight sim engine is a program called FLY.EXE. This program requires various data files which define the virtual world, the positions, graphical descriptions ▶



'Users have to grapple with an interface that ▶



# FLIGHT SIM TOOLKIT

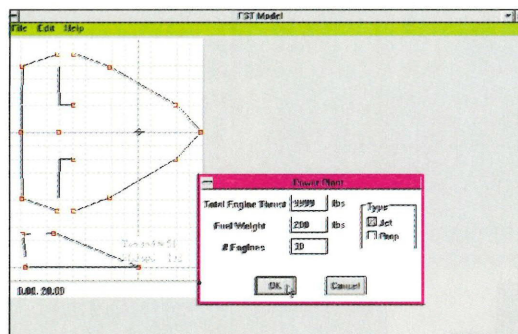


► and behaviour patterns of any objects in that world and information of how all these objects are supposed to interact with each

other. The 3D system and engine that Domark have implemented in FST is the same one that was used for the highly successful Harrier AV8B. FST and provides the user with a set of tools to create these data files, the World Editor and the Shape Editor being the most important.

**The World Editor** allows users to create a landscape, position objects on that landscape and assign characteristics to each object defining its behaviour. For example, we've got a landscape and it's all lovely and contoured with lots of

hills and valleys and other such stuff, but we want to dump a huge great aircraft hangar in the middle of it. We tell the editor that we want to add a new object – this is done by simply clicking on an icon and then we place that object on the map. Now, the object needs a shape, so we pick one from our list of available shape files. Just because it's an aircraft hangar, it doesn't have to look like one, you could assign it with the shape of the Eiffel Tower, a jeep or maybe even a tree. An objects shape does not define its role or behaviour (bit of philosophy for you there). But to be sensible it's best to give objects an appropriate shape.



My slightly ambitious plans for the next generation of fighter aircraft. I'm quite sure it can outfly anything, but it's just a matter of getting it off the runway

world with trucks carrying supplies from depots to hangars and anti aircraft units, planes patrolling enemy airspace, aircraft carriers guarding supply boats, but how you tie all this into a performance dependant, multi-mission campaign is a complete mystery.

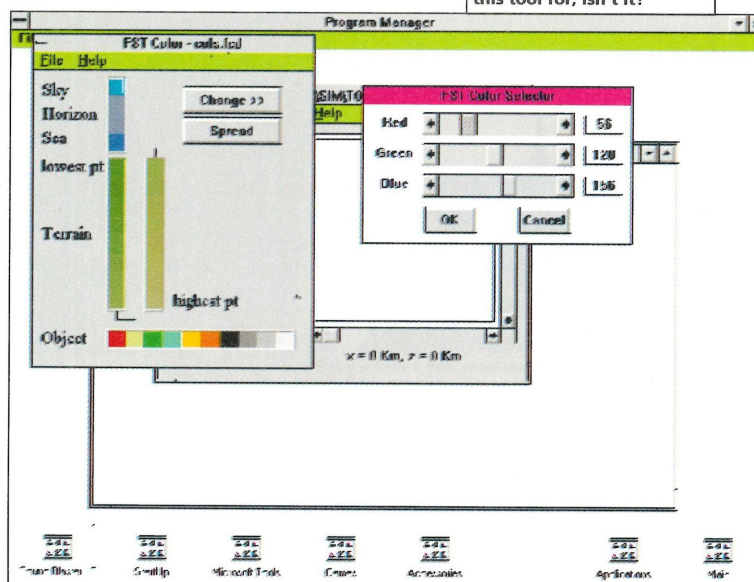
**The Shape Editor** is an appalling part of the package and it is pretty unbelievable that the people who released 3D Construction Kit 2 would let this abomination onto the shelves with their label on it. It's not completely impossible to get to grips with, but it is unnecessarily complicated.

What would have been wrong with using the nice simple system employed in the aforementioned package? Instead, users have to grapple with an interface that would reduce Oxford's Head Lecturer in Computer Aided Design to a gibbering wreck.

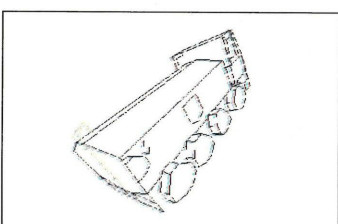
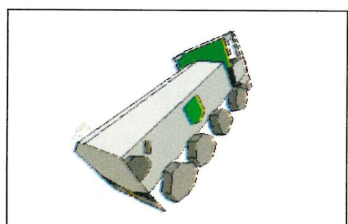
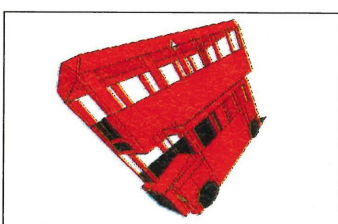
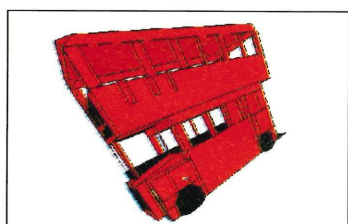
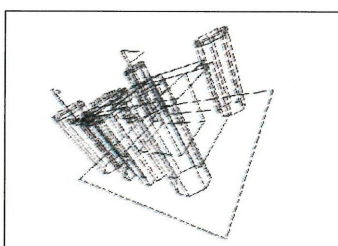
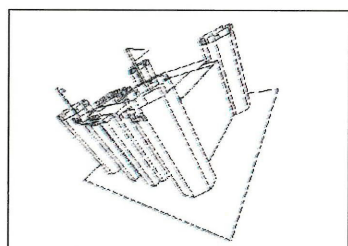
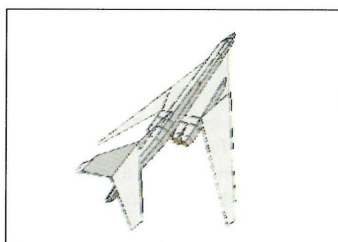
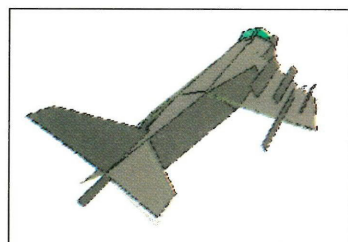
The other tools which are available are as follows – the Colour Editor, the Cockpit Editor and the Aerodynamic Model Editor. The Cockpit Editor will allow you to import a picture of a cockpit and place the relevant knobs, dials and widgets on it. The fact that you can design your own cockpits also allows you to experiment to the outer limits of your imagination.

Any art package can be used to design the cockpit layouts but the best ones to use are probably Deluxe Paint and Windows Paint. These are simple, straightforward and flexible tools. The same can be said for the Aerodynamic

The Colours Editor, it's fairly obvious what you use this tool for, isn't it?

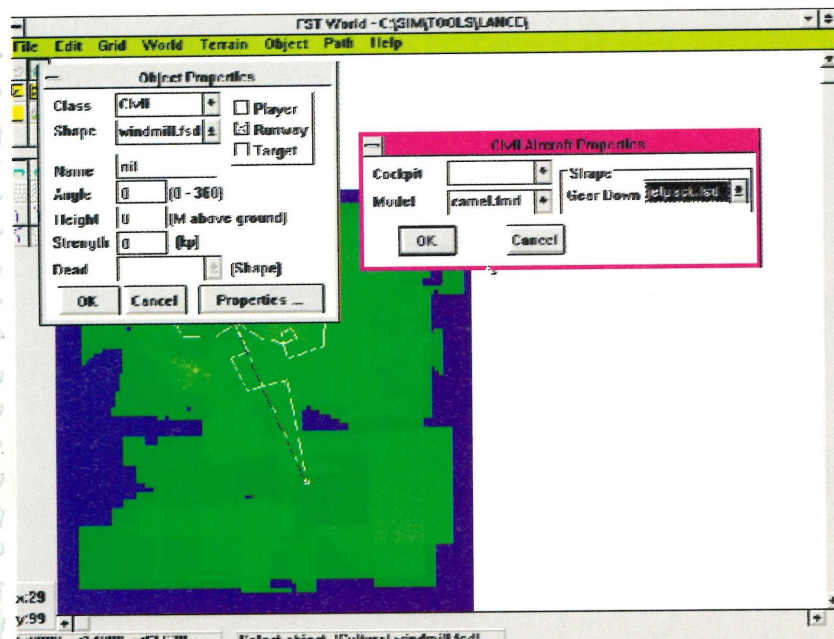


The objects that you can design in the Flight Sim Toolkit are limited only by your imagination. All the elements in a flight simulator are made up of 3D objects, aside from the ground and sky. Designing of objects is performed in wireframe 3D. Wireframe is used because you can easily see the individual geometric shapes that make up an object and it is quicker to move them. However, once the object has been designed you can view it as a solid 3D object, with shading and colour. There are plenty of different objects to choose from including planes, ships, buildings, tankers, castles and even a London bus.



## would reduce Oxford's Head Lecturer in Compute





The object properties box enables users to define an object's behaviour within the virtual world

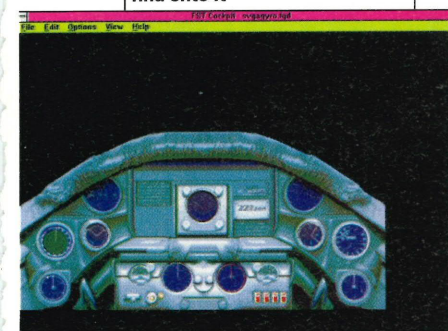
Model Editor which allows you to define the characteristics and capabilities of any vehicle in your simulator.

When you first use the Aerodynamic Model Editor you may find it resembles something you've seen before. In fact this element of FST is very similar in many respects to the AME used in MicroSoft's Flight Simulator 5. You'll really need a reasonable knowledge of how aircrafts work to get the most from this tool, but the uninitiated will soon learn what's what by simply playing around with it.

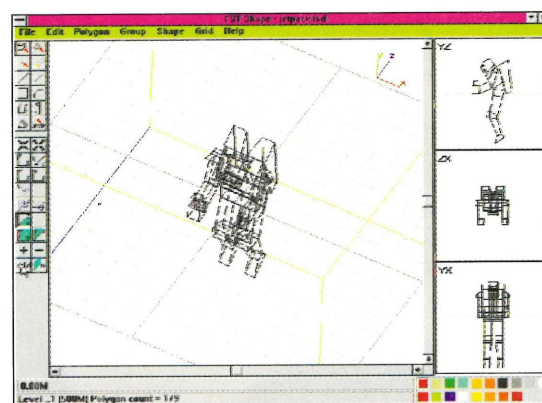
However, by playing around with FST and becoming more adept at designing your own flight simulator the down side of the product soon becomes apparent.

There is absolutely no information whatsoever as to whether or not you can distribute your finished sim without bringing the wrath of Domark on your head. This is important because many people will want to share their games with other people.

The Cockpit Editor allows you to import a picture and place the various dials and lights that you find onto it



The file handling system is also flawed. You cannot copy example files from within the tools environment. If you do want to copy the files you have to exit, copy the appropriate files and then re-enter the tools environment. A rather long-winded process you'll agree. If you are desperate to create your own flight sims then FST is for you, but many purchasers may lose interest early on due to its complexity.



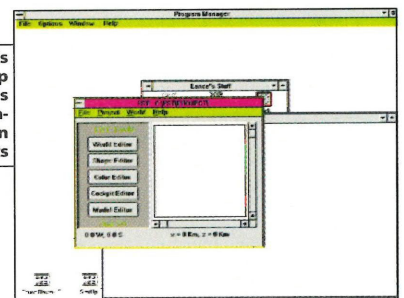
The Flight Model Editor. This is where you decide on the handling and the performance capabilities of your aircraft. The diagram has nothing to do with the plane's shape, it just affects how it performs. Plane performance charts can be found in military books

## déjà-vu

There's not really much that you can compare against a program like this. However **Klik 'n' Play** from Europress Software is the nearest we get to this type of genre. This Windows games creator makes it really easy to knock up all sorts of games and fancy screen saving patterns, the like of which you've never seen before, at least not running in Windows anyway. After having had a sneak preview of the program it is certainly set to be impressive. If you've always wanted to create your own games but haven't the patience required for Flight Sim Toolkit then this package could certainly be the one for you. Look out for a full review in the near future.



The Main Menu is where you load up the various tools and transfer data-files between different projects



This is a little something I knocked up myself in five minutes. Well, I must admit I actually copied it from the examples directory

## appraisal

Flight Sim Toolkit is by no means perfect and it has got a number of faults, but even so it's still good enough to keep you occupied for a long time. It may take a number of days to get to grips with the handling of the package but once that has been overcome it's technical ingenuity all the way. Certainly not for those people who like to use their PC to just sit back, relax and switch off. Personally it took me a while to get to grips with, but it provided me with a lot of scope to experiment with.

LANCE CONNOR

## second opinion

I was a little disappointed that FST could only be installed through Windows as it is terrible. That gripe aside, FST, although quite complex to learn and master does offer the flight sim buff the chance to create his or her own worlds. It is a long-winded process building a flight simulation using FST but the results warrant the time spent. I wonder though, how many people will fancy a lesson in advanced mathematics and a manual that leaves a lot to be desired.

STEVE WHITE

PCA SCORE **75%**

## data bank

MINIMUM MEMORY  
2MB

MINIMUM PROCESSOR  
386 (Windows required)

OPTIMUM SPEED  
33MHz

INSTALLATION  
Essential

HARD DISK SPACE  
11MB

GRAPHICS  
VGA/SVGA/VESA

SOUND CARDS  
Adlib, SoundBlaster

CONTROLS  
Joystick, Mouse, Thrustmaster

# r Aided Design to a gibbering wreck'



# welcome to the FUTURE

*'No other man-made device since the shields and lances of the ancient knights fulfils a man's ego like an automobile'*

SIR WILLIAM (LATER LORD) ROOTES  
1894-1964 BRITISH MOTOR CAR  
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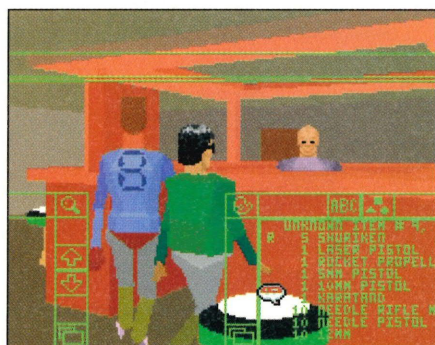
**W**ar is a word of the past and its existence has been replaced by the CyberRace – a revolutionary 3D combat and racing simulation. But it's not just a game. CyberRace is set to determine the future of the galaxy.

Encompassing hundreds of plot variations, cinematic between-race sequences and ultra-fast voxel landscapes, this is a unique racing experience. With the expertise of futuristic designer Syd Mead and software publisher Cyberdreams Inc., this game aims to set new standards of both quality and action. As Patrick Ketchum, president and CEO of Cyberdreams enthuses, 'a product unlike anything else on the market'.

The planets of the Universe are competing against each other and each planet is represented by one lone driver who takes part in a series of car races organised to prevent the destruction of the solar system. Clay Shaw is one of the best and fastest drivers on the circuit, and he is being blackmailed to compete.

Clay swore he'd never race again after watching his father die on the dangerous Cybertrack. But the galaxy is at stake and the Terran Empire have kidnapped his girlfriend to ensure that he competes.

The battle of speed, firepower, cunning and intellect is on and you have the chance to compete. PC Action along with Cyberdreams are offering you the chance to win a copy of CyberRace and numerous other exclusive prizes in this futuristic competition. Just answer the question on the left and you may be one of the lucky winners.



**1st Prize** – Copy of CyberRace, Blade Runner Director's Cut video, CyberRace T-shirt, Baseball Cap and Key Ring.

**2nd Prize** – Copy of CyberRace and T-shirt.

**3rd Prize** – Copy of CyberRace.

**Five runners up** prizes of CyberRace T-shirts.



Name three science fiction films that Syd Mead, the designer of CyberRace has been involved in.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

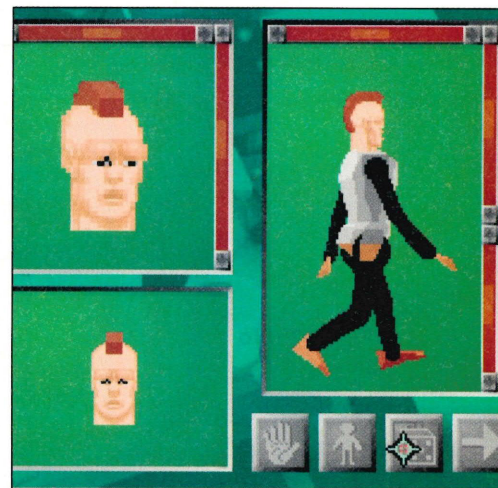
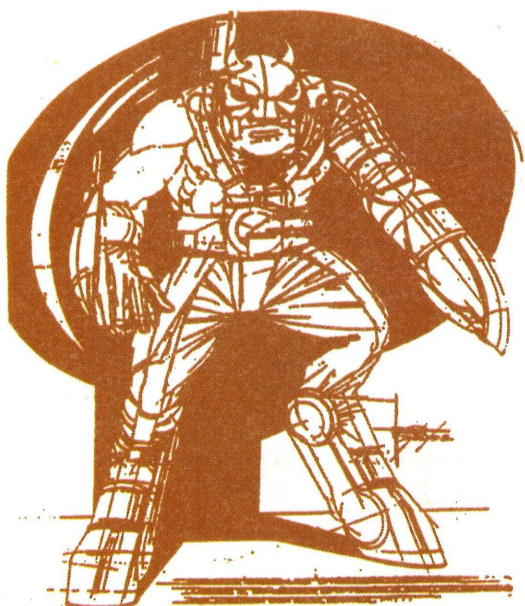
Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Postcode: \_\_\_\_\_

Age: \_\_\_\_\_

Send this entry form to: Futuristic Competition, PC Action, Europa House, Adlington Park, Macclesfield, SK10 4NP. All entries should reach us no later than March 1. Employees of Europress may not enter this competition. Neither can their families. The editor's decision is final and no correspondence can be entered into.





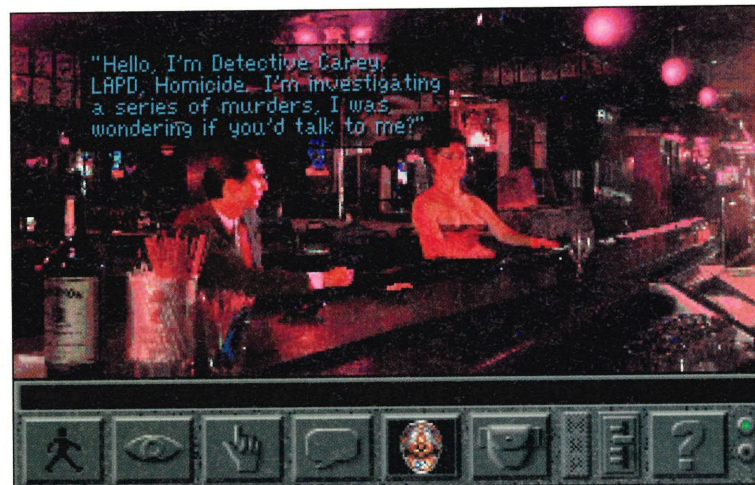
# POLICE QUEST - OPEN SEASON

PUBLISHER	Sierra
CONTACT	0743 303322
TEAM	In House
PRICE	£39.99
RELEASE DATE	Out Now

*'He threatens many that hath injured one'*

BEN JONSON 1573-1637

I thought the coroner was supposed to examine dead bodies. Nobles reckons Sherry has a chest cold, he really should concentrate on his stiffs



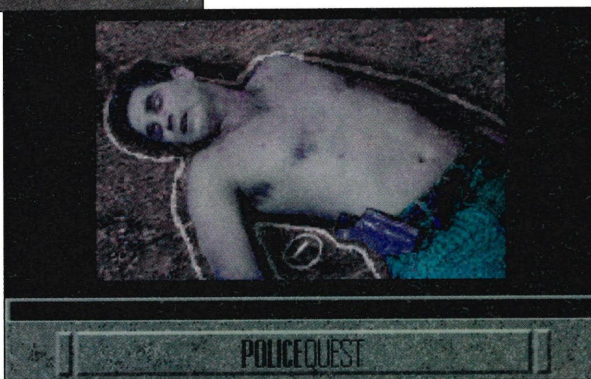
The Kitty Bitty bar is a rather dodgy club that some officers often frequent. In between questioning the broad at the bar you can sneak quick glances at the naughty dancer

**Something of a nineties phenomenon, Serial Killers are big news. Join us as we stalk the streets of Los Angeles in search of a monster who must be stopped**

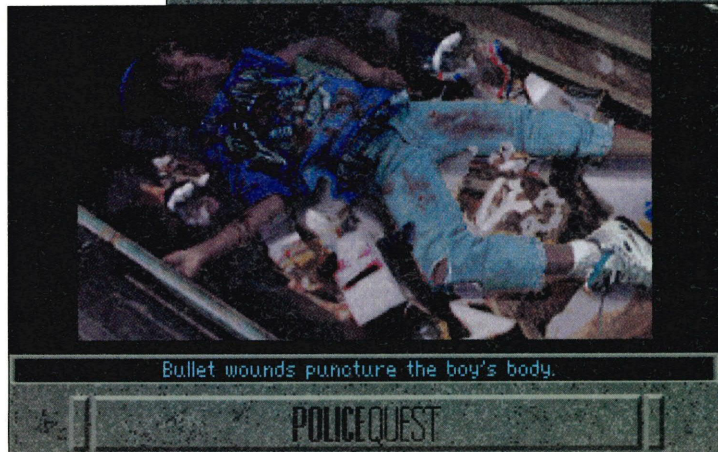


As the game commences you are called to the scene of yet another crime

If you are familiar with the previous Police Quest games then Open Season could come as something of a shock. It contains scenes that younger players might find disturbing, see the warning on the game's packaging. Also the hero of the first three instalments, Detective Sonny Bonds, appears to have finally hung



Further investigation of the crime scene reveals another body. This time a young boy lies hidden in a dumpster. Could these murders be connected?



Bullet wounds puncture the boy's body.

The mans body turns out to be none other than Bob Hickman your old partner and best buddy. He was working undercover, now he's just underground

up his badge, while the original Police Quest author, Jim Walls, has been replaced.

Open Season has been penned by none other than retired Los Angeles Police Chief, Daryl F. Gates, a veteran with forty-three years experience behind him. He has worked on some of America's most notorious cases - the Hillside Strangler case and the Charles Manson murders are just two examples.

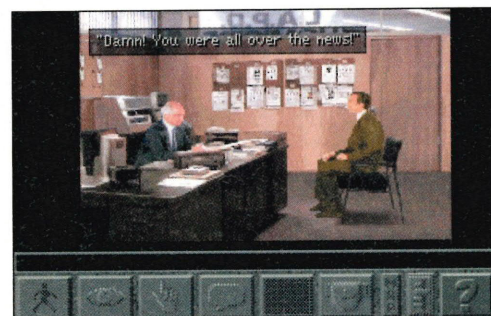
There's one thing you ought to know before you start installing Sierra's latest quest game onto your hard disk. This

sucker comes supplied on 12, yes 12, high density disks and takes up a massive twenty-

two and a half megabytes of hard disk space. As you can imagine it also takes a good few minutes to install.

However, Sierra have had the foresight to provide you with a little lightweight reading material while you swap those disks. In this case (no pun intended) it's a manual packed with over a hundred pages of near useless information regarding various police procedures of the Los Angeles Police Department. So having refreshed your memory on how an LAPD detective should conduct himself it's time to start the investigation.

After watching the rather bland introduction it is straight into the thick of things. You must assume the role of one John Carey, homicide detective. Following up a call you find yourself in a dimly lit alleyway at the rear of 77th Street, South Central LA - the final



The lieutenant will cover your back at all times just as long as the investigation is achieving results. Make his job easier and don't hassle the media people

resting place of some poor guy. Already a homicide team is in place and it's down to you to begin conducting the investigation.

Okay, let's just take time-out here to explain the graphics and the control system. Open Season looks good, digitised graphics of real actors have replaced the older style sprites that used to appear in Sierra games. The backgrounds all look like they have been scanned from photographs and then touched-up where needed. All in all, the game feels right and even manages to convince you that it could be a real investigation taking place somewhere in downtown LA.

**The control system** is the same as that employed in all the recent Sierra titles, namely the icon-driven point and click interface controlled via the mouse. Personally, I prefer the more traditional system employed in the likes of Simon the Sorcerer, Day of the Tentacle and Indiana Jones and the Fate of Atlantis. Sierra's Quest games have always used the icon system and now, with LucasArts' Sam and Max adopting the same method, it seems like it has become the universal standard.

So back to the scene of the crime. Situated behind the rather unfortunately named Lucky Mart, in ►



# POLICE QUEST - OPEN SEASON



► the alleyway is yet another shocking indictment of urban life. Sprawled out, face up in the dirt is the body of a young, Caucasian man.

Further investigation proves even more startling, the dead man is non other than an old buddy, Bob Hickman. He's been brutally murdered. There are no gunshot wounds but his withered body is covered in scratches and bruises. Along with the homicide

team all the necessary information is logged and then a second body is uncovered. Hidden in a dumpster is the body of a young Afro-American boy, his chest is riddled with bullet-holes. Somewhere in this urban nightmare there is a sick killer and it is down to you to catch him, or her!

At this point I'd just like to point out how frustrating the game was becoming. Progressing through the game was where the problem lay. I read up the correct procedures in the manual, I tried nearly everything I could think of

but still the crime squad wouldn't let me leave. So what was the problem? Well, next to Hickman's body is a cigarette end and I needed to draw around it with my chalk.

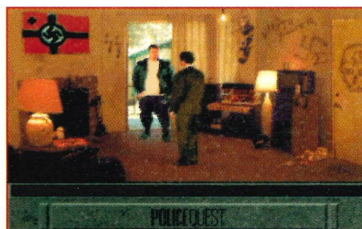
*I should have known* better, but when the computer told me that drawing a white line around the body is something that is only done in movies and not computer games, I instantly dismissed the chalk as some sort of gimmick. Yes, Open Season was really getting me down. Progress can only be

made once certain actions have been made and for those of you, like me, who aren't too familiar with police procedures it can be a real headache.

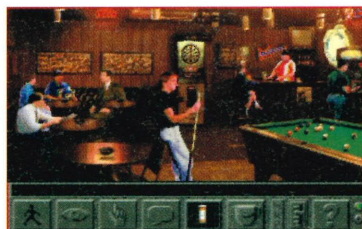
After my somewhat shaky start things soon started to move quickly. Already it was the third day of the case and I had not one, not two, but five corpses on my hands. What's more, my life had been on the line too. I'd come close to being stabbed, shot and clubbed to death. Still it's all in a days work for an LAPD cop.

I'd gleaned a fair picture of the killer. Yep this guy was crazy, a serial killer

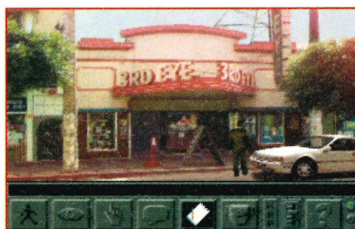
## 'Hidden in a dumpster is the body of a young Afro-



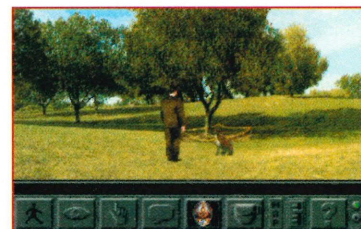
You'll get to meet a number of different characters, some of whom don't exactly appear to be model citizens



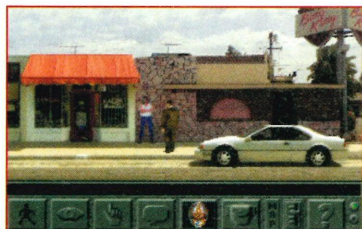
The Short Stop Bar is the local hang-out for all you boys in blue. Have a drink here at the end of the day but don't let the Boss catch you in your lunch hour



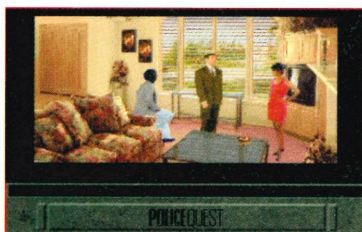
The Third Eye theatre shows old movies and art films. Now I wonder what art films are?



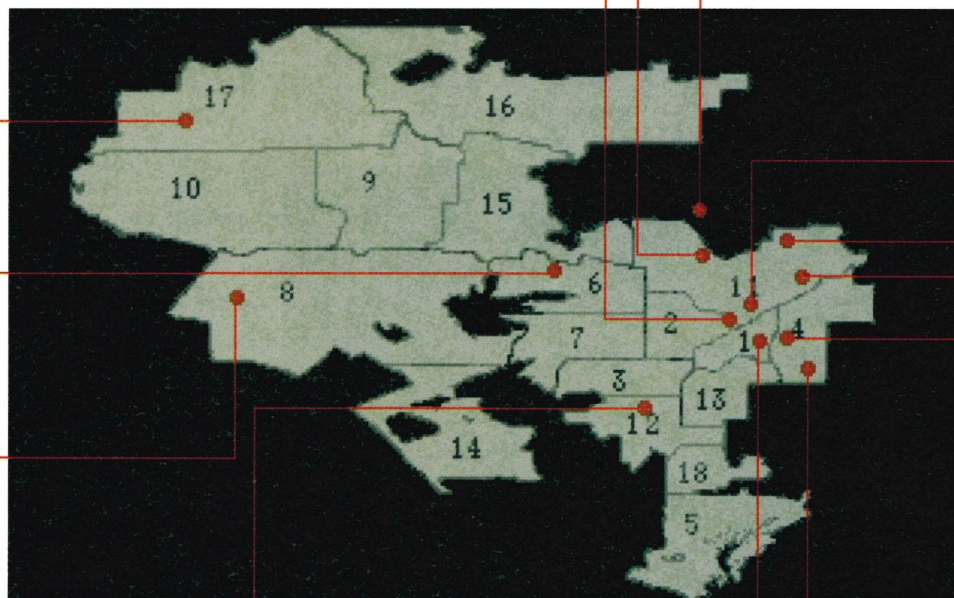
Giffith Park is the scene of yet another brutal murder. Just why is the killer doing this? It's up to you to stop him/her - and fast!



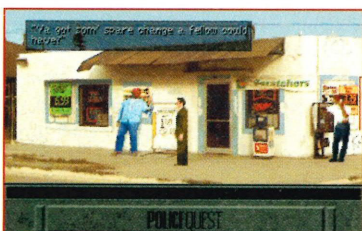
Hollywood and Vine contain two locations to visit. Ragin' Records is owned by a guy who looks like one of the Red Hot Chili Peppers and your hostess at the Kitty Bitty bar is a schwing babe



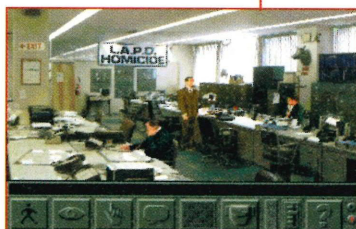
Yo Money is a very famous rap star. He lives here in this rather plush mansion and has recently made a startling discovery - a body on his lawn



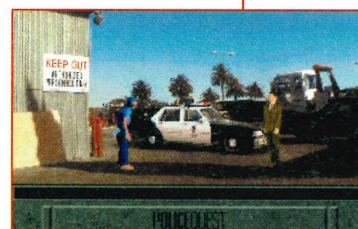
Los Angeles is a pretty big place and you'll be visiting a lot of it. Transportation is made quicker with this handy map - just point and go



77th Street, South Central. A rundown part of the town, 77th is the first place you'll visit and it'll also provide you with your first solid lead



The Parker Centre is where you'll find your office. All kinds of information can be gathered here. Don't forget to visit the Property Dept. and SID



Cars involved at the scene of a crime will be towed to the lot. SID are supposed to check them out but I guess a second opinion wouldn't hurt



who prayed on cops. He'd mutilate his victims so he could keep "trophies" of his kills. He'd glue up their eyes, ears and mouths in an eerie "see no evil, hear no evil, speak no evil" kind of way. He'd torture his victims before injecting them with a lethal cocktail and he had some sort of cross-dressing fetish. Boy, did we need to find him and fast!

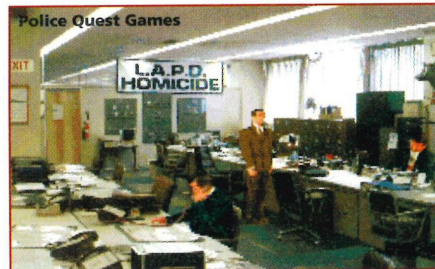
Open Season takes you around the sights of Los Angeles, in fact the game was shot on location within the city. In addition to the guys back at the Parker Centre you also bump into some very

strange characters indeed. Yo Money is a dude, a mega-rich rapper who lives in a mansion over on the west side. There is Barbie Cann, the owner of the rather dodgy Kitty Bar and Dennis Walker a member of the Aryans for Justice cult who is a real racist. Chief Gates certainly used his experience in creating a believable scenario.

**If I rant on about** the game for much longer I might give away too many clues, but believe you me, you might just need them. Progress can be pretty slow

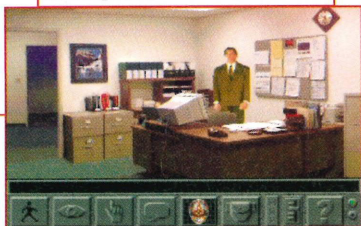
## déjà-vu

**O**pen Season is similar to the other **Police Quest Games**. This one's more hard hitting but they're all fairly similar. I suggest you take a look at **PQ1 - In Pursuit of the Death Angel**. It is now available on budget and features improved graphics too. In the meantime, if you're really into the American cops and robbers why not nip down to your local video store and rent out some Clint Eastwood, Dirty Harry movies?

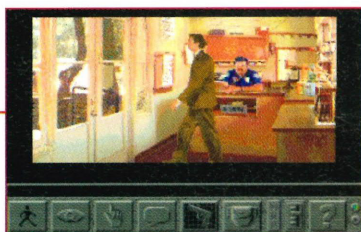


# American boy, his chest riddled with bullet-holes'

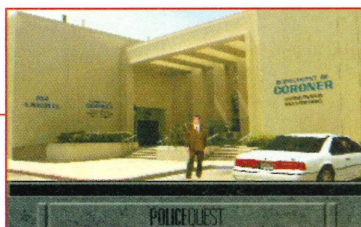
Why not pay a visit to the Social Services Department. If you rummage around and keep patient you may come across some vital evidence for the investigation



Your job covers many different aspects of policing. One of the harder tasks is informing relatives about the loss of their loved ones



Law enforcement officers should know how to defend themselves. A visit to the Police Academy will allow you to fine tune your skills



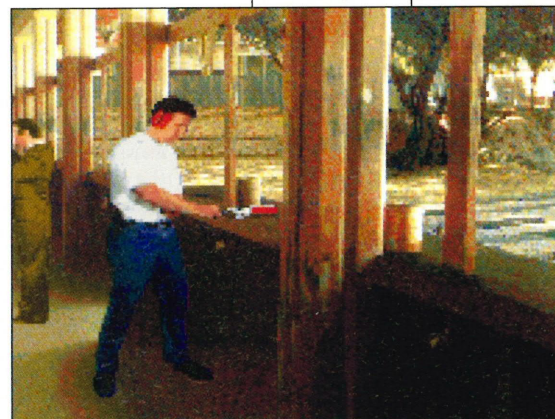
The City Morgue is the home of Nobles, the senior coroner. He can provide you with valuable info and is always worth talking to when you need a new lead

at times and I often found myself running around the city of Los Angeles for that elusive last thing to do before the day would end.

In your office there are three things that are really annoying. First the lift sequence - it'll be too soon if I ever see that again. Secondly the telephone, very useful - if only I had somebody's number! And finally the crime computer,

a source of untold clues and help, but what's the damned password? Well if you want a hint with the last one here it is - the ID number can be found on your badge and the password on the photo of you and Hickman. Good luck in finding that killer, you'll need it!

Down at the academy it's time to sharpen up on your shooting skills. Make sure you have all the right protective gear and proceed to the range



You might just get the chance to put your training into action. Let's just hope you took target practise seriously



Aim for the centre of the chest and let fly with as many shots as possible in order to achieve a premium score

## appraisal

**I**t's good. Sure it's very linear, but it is an adventure and not an RPG. There are also one or two minor flaws within the game, but the powerful storyline pulls it through. Whether the subject matter is one that will appeal to everyone is dubious, it is pretty heavy going at times. However, once you become immersed in the seedy urban life that makes up the very fabric of downtown Los Angeles you won't want to leave it. Daryl Gates has created a rich story that will keep even the most avid adventurer on his toes. Well presented and highly polished, Police

Quest - Open Season is a fine piece of software, not outstanding, but good.

STEVE WHITE

## second opinion

**I**t's great to see a computer game with such a tense and exciting atmosphere. Police Quest 4 tackles an awkward subject and brings the task of solving a vicious murder into your living room. Graphically and sonically it's great but the plot does become a little too complex later on. Not for the faint hearted.

DAVE LONGWORTH

PCA SCORE **74%**

## data bank

### MINIMUM MEMORY

4MB Ram

### MINIMUM PROCESSOR

386

### OPTIMUM SPEED

16MHz

### INSTALLATION

Essential

### HARD DISK SPACE

22.5MB

### GRAPHICS

VGA

### SOUND CARDS

Roland, SoundBlaster, Adlib

### CONTROLS

Mouse



# CAMPAIGN II

**PUBLISHER** Empire  
**CONTACT** 081 343 9143  
**TEAM** In House  
**PRICE** £39.99  
**RELEASE DATE** Out Now

*Is Campaign II the ultimate wartime strategy game or is it just a good blast in disguise?*

The Campaign series of games are very ambitious in that they attempt to simulate warfare on the ground and in the air simultaneously. Simulation may not be a good word to describe these games as they rely more on strategy – the planning of forces and their ultimate involvement in the combat scenarios.

Campaign II is a definite improvement on the first game and covers 50 years of conflict from Vietnam to Iran and Iraq. Instead of offering the scenarios as data disks, all the major battles over the past 50 years are included with the software.

The user interface is very similar to Campaign I and features a main playing area and an icon interface from which the player can control his forces.

Before entering battle he or she can choose to edit the map, adding trees, hills and various other landmarks. Once



If you perform admirably in combat and manage to defeat the enemy forces you will be rewarded with a few medals

*'We go to gain a little patch of ground that hath in it no profit but the name'*

CAPTAIN, HAMLET - WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE 1564-1616

any changes to the battle map have been made battle can then commence.

Units are given orders such as movement and fire which they will carry out to the best of their ability. A unit moving by road will arrive at its destination far sooner than a unit travelling across country. But this may leave it open to a sneak attack or even the possibility of missing the conflict altogether. Therefore a fair amount of strategical thinking is called for.

When any two rival units clash, the order is given for battle. The player can choose to either play the battle automatically or manually. Combat is the

core of Campaign II and is somewhat arcadey, which may put the strategy player off a little. Most of the time the player controls tanks which are guided around the play area seeking out enemy units.

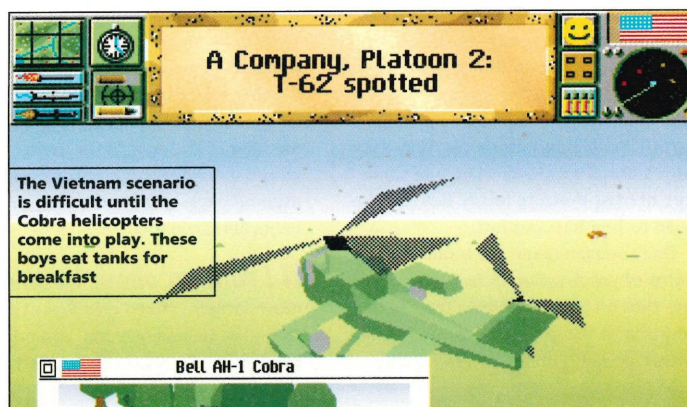
Once a unit has been located it must be destroyed by locking a target marker over it, waiting for the gun to load and then firing the shell, hopefully resulting in the eradication of the opposing unit.

When a friendly tank is destroyed play is switched to the next available one, and if the tanks were not deployed properly at the beginning of the battle this could result in being stranded miles away from friendly units and right in the

thick of enemy firepower.

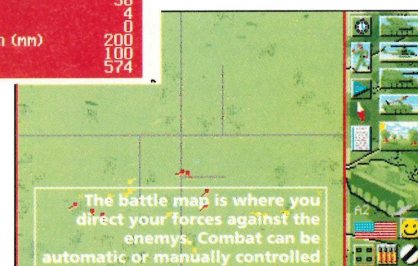
When battle is going badly there is an option to retreat, although this will result in the loss of valuable land and the possibility of further strikes which make recovery extremely difficult. However, if players do well medals and awards will be forthcoming.

Infantry and helicopters also play a major part in deciding the outcome of battles – an element that was sorely lacking in Campaign I and while



Using the extensive database, you can call up any information regarding a particular vehicle type

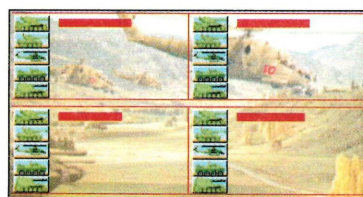
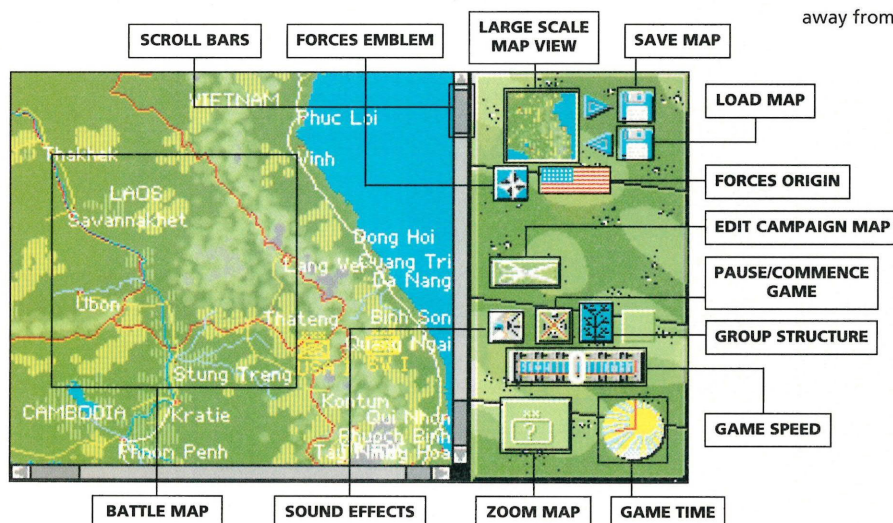
Rockets:	LAU	38
Guided Missiles:	TOW	4
Homing Missiles:		0
Maximum Armour Penetration (mm)		200
Cruising Speed (km/h)		100
Maximum Range (km)		574



infantry cannot be controlled the helicopters can offer intensive firepower.

Included in Campaign is an extensive database of useful military hardware and most of this can be played although it is tanks which make up the bulk of combat elements. All information regarding vehicles is also available from the database and can prove essential when directing forces against a superior enemy force.

At the end of combat a graph is displayed showing both allied and enemy forces before and after the battle. From that point on it's time to return to the map and prepare for the next phase of action.



At the beginning of combat you are shown a graph display which informs you of how many vehicles you have ready to do battle

## appraisal

Although Campaign II is billed as a strategy game in my opinion it looks very arcadey. The graphics are very poor and detract from the seriousness a war-game demands. Although the battle scenes are good fun they cannot really be considered strategical and it is most annoying when your tank is destroyed

only to be moved to a new one which is likewise instantly destroyed and so on. The hierarchy element of the game is neat allowing more control of sub-divisions, but there is no escaping the fact that Campaign II fails to deliver the right material that is expected from a military strategy game.

STEVE WHITE

PCA SCORE **72%**

## data bank

**MINIMUM MEMORY**  
640k

**MINIMUM PROCESSOR**  
386

**OPTIMUM SPEED**  
20MHz

**INSTALLATION**  
Essential

**HARD DISK SPACE**  
3MB

**GRAPHICS**  
VGA

**SOUND CARDS**  
Roland, SoundBlaster, Adlib

**CONTROLS**  
Keyboard, Mouse

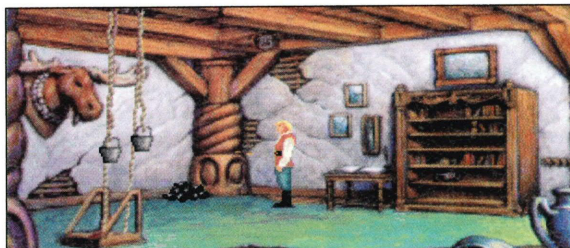


# QUEST FOR GLORY IV: SHADOWS OF DARKNESS

PUBLISHER	Sierra
CONTACT	0734 303 322
TEAM	Lori & Cori Cole
PRICE	£39.99
RELEASE DATE	Out Now

*'I am actually not at all a man of science, not an observer, not an experimenter, not a thinker. I am by temperament nothing but a conquistador – an adventurer'*

SIGMUND FREUD 1856-1939



There's a puzzle to solve in this room but I can't get to grips with it

The combat sequences are a real-time blow-for-blow affair just like role-playing



## 'When you explore the realm of the undead,▶

**D**ark magic has drawn you to Mordavia. Undead creatures walk the forest by night. Shadows of darkness cover the land – it's time to be a hero

Sierra's adventures are fairly thick on the ground at the moment. The fourth game in the award winning Quest for Glory series has just been released and looks set to carry on from where the first three offerings in the series left off. It comes in versions for both Dos and Windows in the same package.

Created by Lori and Corey Cole these games are a unique combination of the adventure and role-playing genres, and once again the Coles have drawn upon their expertise in the different areas of computer, art, theatre and games design to try and create a new benchmark in interactive entertainment.

It's a fantasy adventure set in a mythical Transylvanian valley in which

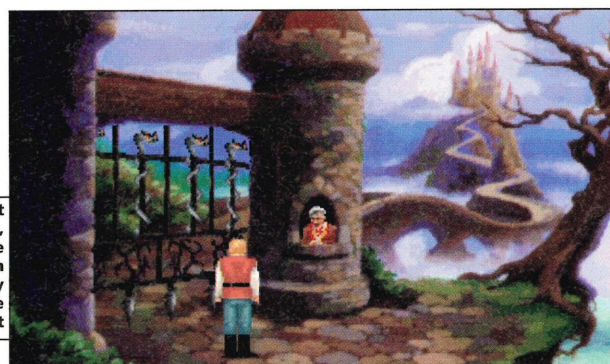
you must battle, steal or conjure your way to success as one of three different heroes: Fighter, Thief or Magician.

Your challenge is to defeat the Dark One. When you explore the realm of the undead to find him, wraiths, vampires and grotesque monsters lurk in the shadows waiting for your next mistake.

But wait a minute, all that's a long way off. There's a lot to do before we even take a single step forward into this world of gruesome geeks.

*Quest for Glory IV* is basically one of your typical Sierra adventures. You know the sort of thing. A series of superbly detailed colourful pictures is shown on the screen – some of them animated – and you have to use the mouse to examine everything in the scene before you move off the edge of the screen in one direction or another to

I need to get into that castle, but there doesn't seem to be any way to do it at the moment



enter another equally colourful picture and start all over again.

But there is also a modicum of role-playing thrown in with this series and you must try to think as your character would when faced with a dilemma. In Shadows you can choose to be either a strong fighter, a mysterious magician or a wily thief.

Each has the same goals but will set about accomplishing them in different ways. The magician can use spells to overcome some obstacles, but might not survive a pitched battle with a monster.

The thief must find a crafty way around a problem that the fighter or magic user might directly approach.

So the first thing you have to do is decide which character you are going to adopt in your particular game. Your selection determines the obstacles you will encounter and the means by which you will overcome them.

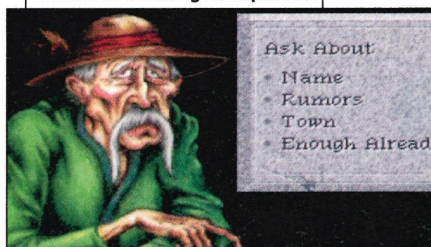
*The opening screen* offers the three alternative roles and you simply click on the one that you want. This presents you with a statistics screen, very much like a full role-playing game, which allows you to modify some of your abilities.

From here you move into the game proper as you are thrust into an ominous dark cave. You have no idea where you are and you have nothing but the clothes on your back.

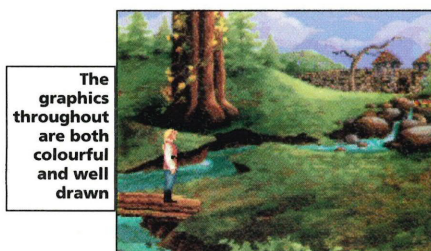
The screen is your 3-D perspective view on the game world in which you see your character and can manipulate him using the mouse pointer. At the top of the screen is the status bar which contains three gauges to indicate the current level of your character's Health, Stamina and Mana.

Pay special attention to the Health gauge. If your character's health is low, drink a healing potion or try to get him ▶

Asking questions to the locals is a matter of choosing from pre-sets



Ask About  
• Name  
• Rumors  
• Town  
• Enough Already

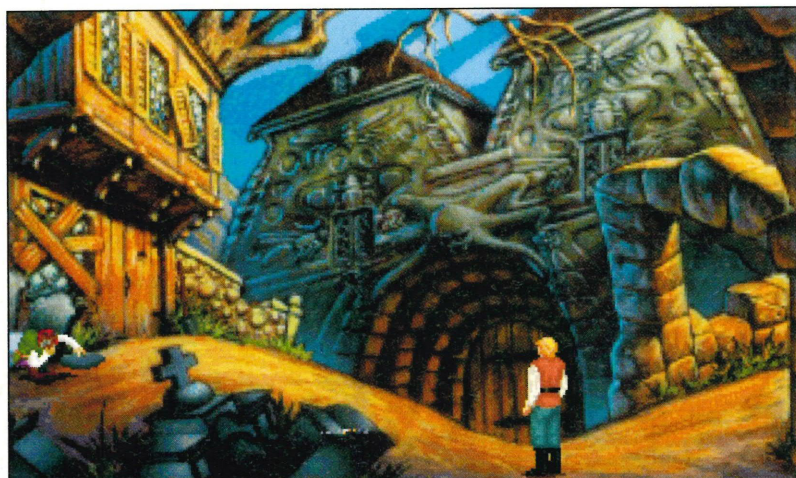


The graphics throughout are both colourful and well drawn



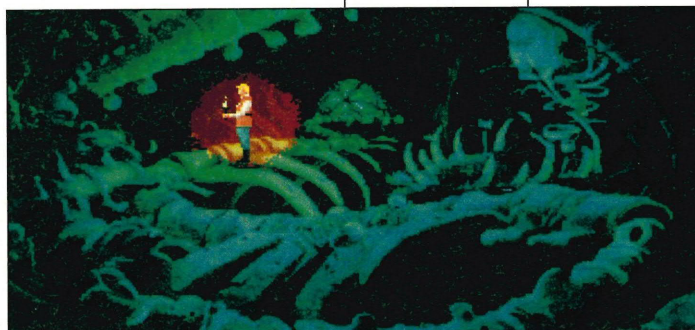
The character selection screen. Take your pick, but the goals are the same





I was given the keys to the guild but I still can't get in, thanks to the large beast over the door

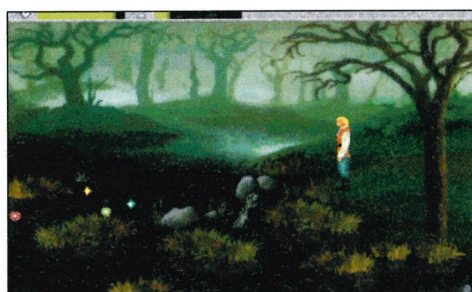
This is the first location and a quick search will soon provide the means for illumination



## wraiths, vampires and grotesque monsters lurk



Access to some locations rests on your ability to solve puzzles like this one



I need to get across the swamp... but I think I'll forget about it for now

used to Look, Use, Walk, Talk to and so on.

These options are also available by moving the mouse pointer to the top of the screen where a menu bar will appear. This contains the

same icons plus additional ones to rest, use magic, special actions, game options and so on.

You'll do a lot of talking in Shadows of Darkness, for it is in conversation that you will pick up many clues to the game. Just click the talk cursor on another character or on your own. Conversation consists of choosing a question from a number of pre-selected options.

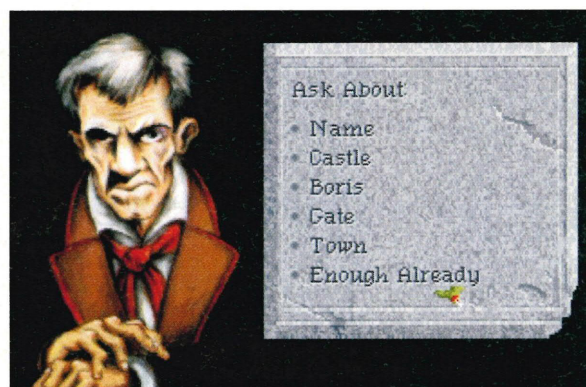
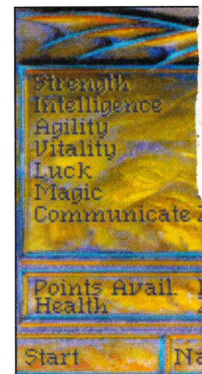
**In many cases** talking to a person again will suggest an additional topic of conversation and a different set of choices to select from will come up.

If your character can use magic you

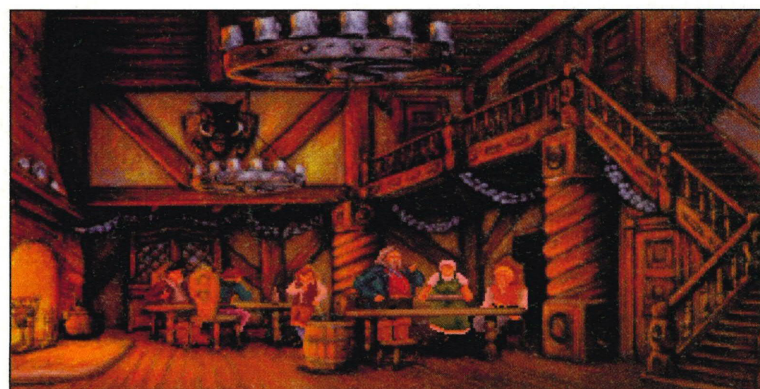
can access the Magic icon on the Main Icon bar. When you click on this a new screen window appears containing icons for all the spells your character knows. Just click on the Eye icon and then on one of the spells to see its name and your skill at casting it.

One unique option in the Quest for Glory series is the ability to set the skill level on the main control panel. Set it high for a serious challenge and monsters will be tougher, puzzles harder and so on. The normal setting provides a pretty fair challenge, while the easy setting generally makes the game a lot easier to play.

Combat, which is real time, is affected by this setting. On the hard level monsters are faster and more difficult to defeat and you must make all combat decisions yourself. On the medium level the computer will assist with defensive



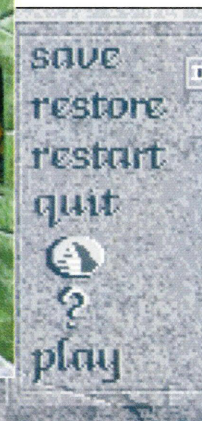
Conversation involves selecting from a choice of six alternatives



Eating regularly is vital if you are to maintain your health

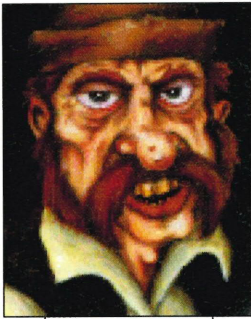


I haven't a clue what the machine in the foreground is all about

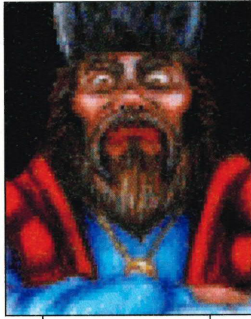




To help pass the time, you can't beat 'avin' a quiet chat with some of the locals in the town



Franz the wealthy garlic grower



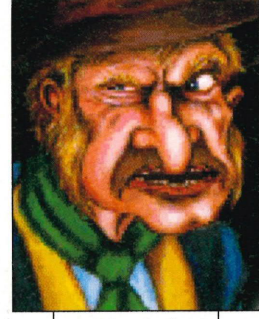
The Burgomeister of Mordavia



Hans the pumpkin farmer



Igor the grave digger

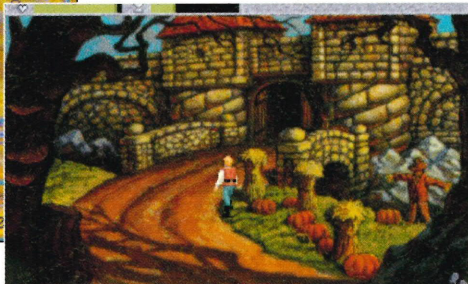


Ivan the elephant herder

# in the shadows waiting for your next mistake'



Just as in a full role-playing game your character has a set of statistics



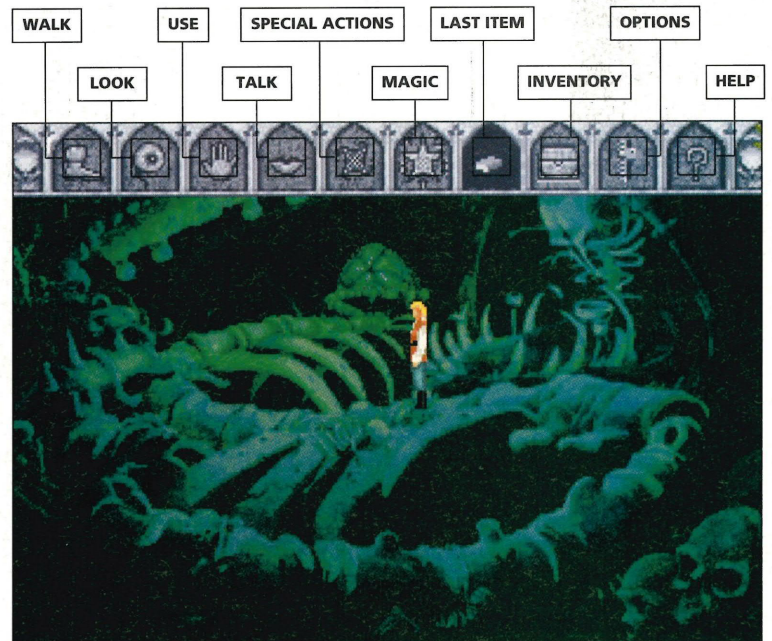
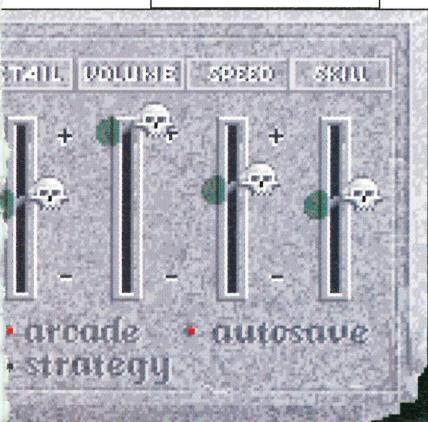
I'm hungry but the game won't let me get at those pumpkins

manoeuvres whenever you are not taking action.

On the easy level the computer will help in both defence and attack. If you do nothing, the computer will take over and only your character's skill level will affect the outcome.

**So that's the theory** but what's it like to play? Well, the interface is a doddle to use and it soon becomes second nature to wander all over the screen looking at everything with the eyeball cursor, handling everything with the fingers and talking to everyone with the mouth.

The Options screen allows you to customise the adventure to suit you



In the first cave you come across a number of objects that can be used – money, a weapon, the means to create light and the exit to the next screen. Also you come across some useful armour and another weapon. It's a good job really because as you try to make your exit you are attacked by Badders (Bat-Spiders).

Combat is a real-time hand-to-hand affair in which you click away hoping for the best, trying to time your blows to best effect and hoping that you'll come out a winner. I found this part of the game to be rather false and uninspiring.

It all comes down really to what you want from a game like this. If you're after a graphics extravaganza, depth of gameplay, puzzles aplenty to keep the old grey matter ticking over and a plot to keep you busy for hours, I believe this has got just what you're looking for.

## appraisal

**f**irst and foremost I'm a role-playing person and I'm not particularly fond of ordinary adventure type games, graphical or otherwise, which rely on strict solutions to puzzles in order to progress to the next area. But I looked at this game because it claimed to contain an element of role-playing. It does, but it isn't my kind of role-playing. It's a superbly illustrated graphics adventure with real-time hand-to-hand combat thrown in for good measure. As such, adventure lovers will delight in it. Role players won't.

ALAN MCLACHLAN

## second opinion

**S**uperbly animated sprites, atmospheric sound effects, an involved plot and superbly drawn backgrounds – all the essential ingredients that make for a classic adventure game and *Shadows of Darkness* has 'em all. The puzzles are challenging and the fantasy element has been perfectly captured, so much so you'll feel like you're really there. Although the game boasts RPG elements it will only really be of interest to adventurers. RPG fans steer clear. Adventurers, go for it.

STEVE WHITE

PCA SCORE **83%**

## data bank

**MINIMUM MEMORY**  
400k

**MINIMUM PROCESSOR**  
386

**OPTIMUM SPEED**  
25MHz

**INSTALLATION**  
Essential

**HARD DISK**  
15MB

**GRAPHICS**  
VGA

**SOUND CARDS** Roland, Adlib, SB, SoundBlaster, Pro Audio Spectrum, General Midi

**CONTROLS**  
Joystick, Mouse



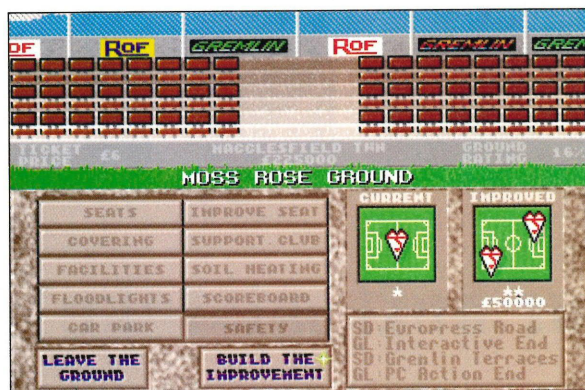
# PREMIER MANAGER 2

**PUBLISHER** Gremlin Graphics  
**CONTACT** 0742 753 423  
**TEAM** Realms of Fantasy  
**PRICE** £34.99  
**RELEASE DATE** Out Now

*'It's a funny old game,  
 one of two halves and if  
 we lose I'll be as sick as  
 a parrot'*

SOMETHING LIKE THIS IS SAID BY JIMMY  
 GREAVES EVERY SATURDAY

Choose your team  
 carefully and then  
 put together the right  
 tactics that will  
 unhinge your  
 opponents. Beginners  
 should try 4-4-2 and  
 the long ball



Your ground starts  
 off as a pretty grim  
 place. Try  
 improving the  
 safety standards  
 early on if you  
 don't want to get  
 some hefty fines

**Admitting to playing football management  
 games used to be a bit like telling the  
 world you're a train-spotter. Not anymore!**

H. MINSTANLEY HACCLESFIELD TOWN 10: CONFERENCE  
 CONTRACT 1 £187050 WEDNESDAY WEEK 1 1993

ITEM	DEBIT	CREDIT
Gate Receipts	0	0
Club Wages	7250	0
Transfer Fees	0	0
Club Fines	0	0
Grants For Club	0	0
Club Bills	0	0
Miscellaneous Sales	0	0
Bank Loan Payments	0	0
Ground Improvements	71000	0
Advertising Boards	0	13300
Other Items	0	0
Account Interest	0	0
<b>Yearly Total</b>	<b>81250</b>	<b>13300</b>
<b>Yearly Balance</b>	<b>-37950</b>	
<b>Money In Account</b>	<b>£187050</b>	
<b>Overdraft Limit</b>	<b>£250000</b>	

Premier Manager 2  
 requires your  
 attention on  
 both player  
 development and  
 financial planning.  
 Try and keep your  
 account in the  
 black at all times

**'Premier Manager 2 is probably the easiest  
 football management game to understand'**

H. MINSTANLEY HACCLESFIELD TOWN 7: CONFERENCE  
 CONTRACT 1 £163326 MONDAY WEEK 8 1993

PS	CLUB NAME	P	A	D	L	F	A	P	T
1	DOVER ATHLETIC	7	5	1	1	13	4	16	16
2	KIDDERMINSTER	7	4	3	0	14	7	15	15
3	KETTERING TOWN	7	4	3	0	14	7	15	15
4	SOUTHPORT	7	4	2	1	15	10	14	14
5	BATH CITY	7	4	2	1	12	9	14	14
6	NORTHAMPTON	7	4	1	2	18	13	13	13
7	HACCLESFIELD TOWN	7	4	1	2	11	9	13	13
8	GRIMSBY	7	3	3	1	12	8	12	12
9	HALIFAX TOWN	7	3	3	1	10	8	11	11
10	WOKING	7	3	3	1	8	11	9	9
11	GATESHEAD	7	3	3	1	8	11	9	9
12	HEATHVALE TOWN	7	3	3	1	10	10	9	9
13	SLough TOWN	7	2	3	2	10	10	8	8
14	ALTRINGHAM	7	2	3	2	6	10	8	8
15	SEARLE TOWN	7	3	3	1	7	9	7	7
16	STALYBRIDGE CLIC	7	3	3	1	14	9	15	7
17	STAFFORD RANGERS	7	1	3	3	5	10	4	6
18	TELFORD UTD	7	1	3	3	4	8	13	5
19	WELLS UTD	7	1	1	5	6	11	4	4
20	BROSGROVE	7	1	1	5	6	13	4	4
21	WITTON ALBION	7	0	3	4	5	12	3	3
22	DAGENHAM	7	0	2	5	3	9	2	2

In the middle of the  
 table and there's still  
 a good few weeks to  
 go. Could this be my  
 lucky season?

Detailed accounts of all matches  
 can be displayed at the end of  
 each day. They're useful if you  
 want to keep an eye on a  
 particular opponent and its squad

CHARITY SHIELD MATCH  
 80000 MEMBLEY STADIUM  
 MANCHESTER UTD 3-0 ARSENAL

MANCHESTER UTD	ARSENAL
GR Schofield	AR Seaman
DE Blackmore	DE Dixon
DE Pallister	DE Linsham
DE Bruce	DE Winterburn
DE Nease	DE Linar
DE Mankelaw	DE Parkour
DE Gigg	AT Smith
AT Sharpe	AT Campbell
AT Cantona	AT Jensen
AT Hughes	AT Wright
AT Duffin	AT Berson
GS Sealey	GS Miller
S McIlair	S Hillier
S Ince	S McIndrick

RATING: Superb  
 STYLE: Pressure  
 TACKLING: Soft  
 PASSING: Low  
 MARKING: Man to Man  
 SHOOTING: Medium

H. MINSTANLEY HACCLESFIELD TOWN 10: CONFERENCE  
 CONTRACT 1 £184300 MONDAY WEEK 1 1993

PLAYER NAME	HN	TK	PS	SH	CR	FIF
1 FARRELLY	28	16	11	6	11	981
2 SHEPHERD	7	26	16	20	16	998
3 KENDALL	7	26	23	8	20	991
4 EDWARDS	7	28	2	3	12	948
5 GORDON	5	25	2	3	12	948
6 SORVEL	11	18	23	20	22	971
7 ASKEY	9	19	23	12	82	968
8 TIMMONS	7	17	23	10	11	978
9 HUGHAN	11	20	16	30	37	928
10 LEICESTER	8	4	20	28	13	948
11 GREEN	5	7	24	25	18	948

FORMATION: 5-2-3

Call up the job  
 centre and get  
 some specialist  
 help as and when  
 you need it. A  
 sneaky option is  
 to employ  
 coaches just  
 before the end of  
 the season and  
 fire them at the  
 beginning of it

Unlike other management  
 games you can't start your  
 career at the helm of one of  
 the country's more  
 prestigious clubs. There's no  
 dream ticket here. It's a slow  
 start with one of the Vauxhall  
 Conference league teams. You  
 know, the likes of Witton Albion,  
 Dagenham or the mighty  
 Macclesfield Town.

A quick call to the club secretary will  
 indicate just how lowly you're rated by  
 the directors and supporters alike. Still,  
 everybody's got to start somewhere and  
 the only way is up. Success isn't only  
 managed on the field, to win at this  
 game you'll also have to balance the  
 books. Shrewd managers will realise this  
 and capitalise on their strengths whilst  
 keeping their weaknesses in check.

Premier Manager 2 is probably the  
 easiest football management game to  
 understand. Played via an icon-driven  
 menu the game covers all aspects of the  
 job. Newcomers to the game can find  
 themselves immersed in the game within  
 minutes of installing it. And after

before any match starts players should  
 be contacted to ensure they are still  
 signed-up with the club - failure to do  
 this could see them jumping ship.

During the season it is also advisable  
 to keep a keen eye on the transfer  
 market. Unless you're particularly rich it's  
 worthwhile looking out for talented  
 players who are out of contract. Should  
 you manage to tempt such a player to  
 join your club then you won't have to  
 pay a big fat transfer check to his  
 previous employer.

If all is going well and your  
 bank balance will allow it, it's a good  
 idea to invest some money in the ground  
 itself. After all, if the ground facilities  
 are good and your team are performing  
 well you should tempt even more  
 spectators to attend, thus earning more  
 revenue. Another way of raising money  
 is to sell some advertising space around  
 the ground.

Training players is made easy too. A  
 quick call to the job centre will allow you  
 to see just what coaches are looking for  
 employment. In the early stages of your

loading the game you may decide that  
 you want to play alone or with a friend -  
 action between the two is toggled via  
 the spacebar.

The first task facing new  
 managers is to arrange pre-season  
 friendlies. Up to four games can be  
 scheduled and the more business-  
 minded amongst you will soon learn that  
 in addition to trying out different  
 formations and playing styles with your  
 squad, home-played games can provide  
 the opportunity to generate a few more  
 pounds with which to swell your coffers.  
 All of your squad have a contract and

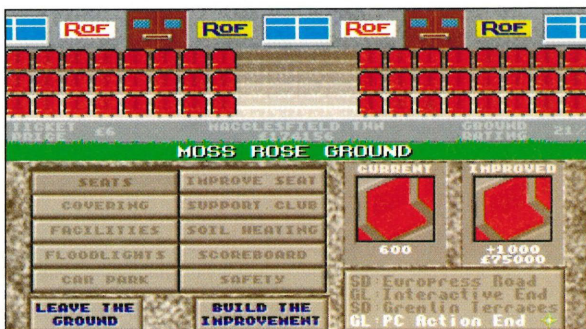
career it's best to employ a single head-  
 coach, but as you progress specialists can  
 be called in to concentrate on shooting,  
 passing, tackling and goalkeeping. In  
 addition, scouts and physios can be hired  
 and are essential to your success.

Players are graded in stars. Fair and a  
 single star means a player with two left  
 feet, while a rating of "World Class"  
 means you've got a potential Ryan Giggs  
 on your hands. Players' stats are broken  
 down into a number of areas - handling,  
 tackling, passing, shooting, fitness and  
 control. The higher the stats the better  
 the player and the more money he's  
 worth to a manager. It should be



## déjà-vu

Football Management games are pretty common. If you're interested in other titles you could probably get **Premier Manager 1** at a reasonable price. Otherwise why not have a look at Domark's **Championship Manager** range. They have a number of seasonal add-ons plus a complete Italian league data disk – now that's what I call a European challenge.



Once you've spent a lot of money on your ground you'll start attracting larger crowds and you'll be able to charge higher gate prices

obvious, but for best results put the player with the highest handling skills in goal, tackling skills in defence and so on.

**After choosing your** match tactics of which there are loads (formation, marking, passing height, shooting distance etc.), it's time to actually watch a match. A small ball travels up and down a bar and indicates the position of the ball on the field. A brief summary of what's going on is printed to either side of the bar, while goal scorers and bookings are listed underneath. The highlights are shown on a large dot-matrix screen and whilst the whole thing may sound a little dull let me assure you it's heart-stopping, especially when your team are a goal down with only ten minutes to go.

To sum up Premier Manager, it is a damned fine game and one that probably deserves to gain the 'best football management game' title.

## data bank

**MINIMUM MEMORY**  
590+2MB

**MINIMUM PROCESSOR**  
386 (486 Recommended)

**OPTIMUM SPEED**  
33MHz

**INSTALLATION**  
Yes

**HARD DISK**  
3.8MB

**GRAPHICS**  
VGA

**SOUND CARDS**  
Roland, SoundBlaster

**CONTROLS**  
Joystick, Mouse

## appraisal

**f**or me Premier Manager 2 is the best game of its type. Graphically it isn't eye catching and the sound is pretty average. However, it's the gameplay that lifts this head and shoulders above the others. Whilst not as detailed as Domark's Championship Manager games, it is faster and more readily accessible. It's no walk over either, I've played it for six seasons now and I've only just clawed my way into the second division. Some of the wording on the packaging is misleading, two items that caught my eye were the European Challenge – do they mean the friendlies and the cup games? And where exactly do you set the crowd control? Still, the best of the bunch, Premier Manager 2 is certainly worth investigating.

**NORMAN WINSTANLEY**

## second opinion

**t**his footballing bonanza really made me think. It's bang up to date, with options to build up the stadium and a tight financial budget to control. And as only a fraction of the time is taken up with playing the actual games, so your success on the pitch is only part of your success as a manager. Now I understand why Cloughy took to the drink and why Souness went so far as to give the Vs – it was the frustration of meetings with the sexy club secretary, the intrigue of scouting around for new players and trying to hold onto your stars. Whether this is realistic or not, the game of football management is deceptively easy to play, but incredibly hard to master.

**DAVID LONGWORTH**

PCA SCORE **92%**

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Trevan Designs Ltd. PO Box 13, Aldershot, Hants. GU12 6YX



# KINGS TABLE

PUBLISHER	Gametek
CONTACT	0753 553445
TEAM	Imagitek
PRICE	£29.99
RELEASE DATE	Feb

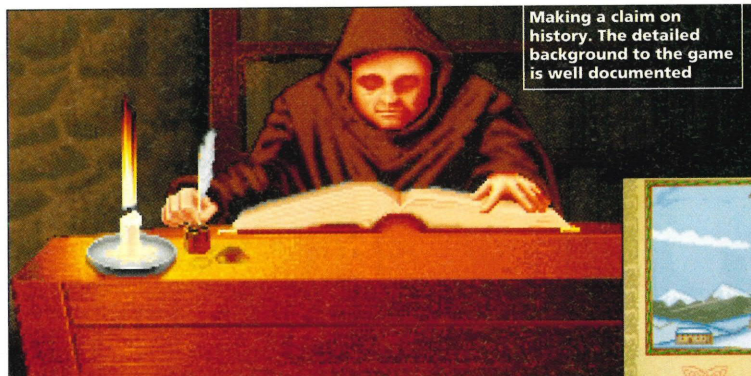
**T**he trouble with putting board games on the PC is that unless you have a very smooth user interface, you might as well play it with real pieces. Chess games are a success only because they allow you to play on your own, testing your skills against different computer difficulty levels. But they will never replace the visual delight of the big marble chess set or the appeal of facing your opponent across the board, head to head as it were.

Kings Table is, 'an extraordinarily entertaining fantasy board game', according to its publishers Gametek. But the only extraordinary thing is how uninspiring it is, considering the imaginative fairytale background and the history of the game.

The earliest evidence of a Kings Table board game dates to around 400 AD,

*'The board is the world, the pieces are the phenomena of the Universe, the rules of the game are what we call the laws of Nature'*

T.H. HUXLEY 1825-1895



Making a claim on history. The detailed background to the game is well documented

when fragments of the game, then known as Taff, were found in an Iron Age grave in Denmark.

**There were two sets** of 13 pieces as in chess, the white pieces surrounding their king in the middle of the board. The king had to reach the edge of the board, the black side had to prevent it and pieces were taken by surrounding them on two or four sides. Also included in this package is

Ragnarok, which is a variation on that theme. 'Ragnarok' is an old Norse word for the mythological time when the gods would gather together for a huge apocalyptic battle. But it looks more like a bunch of kids playing bows and arrows when you see it on this board.

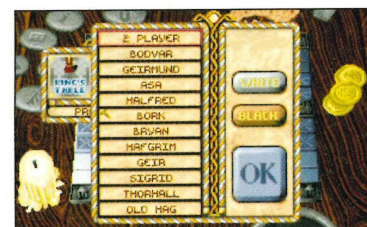
Mirroring the conflict on the board is an even wider contest, as Odin, King of the Gods goes to various ale houses, game under his arm, to challenge shady characters in the decaying human world. His objective is to observe them and learn their thought patterns.

He plays each opponent twice, first as black and then as white, before advancing on to the next skill level and the next opponent. Odin believes that by doing this he will be able to see into the future.

**The gameplay** isn't really worth the program it's written on and the 3D presentation and screens of the opponents are of a very poor standard. In the Ragnarok game, the special pieces are too similar to each other.

Some move diagonally, some two spaces horizontally or vertically and some can even jump over pieces. But it is sometimes difficult to differentiate between both the giants and warriors, and the pawns.

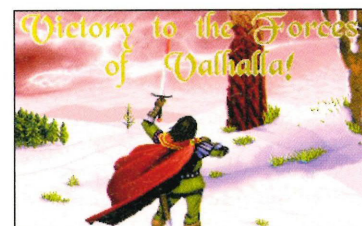
When a piece is taken, the display cuts to an animated death scene like on Battle Chess 4000. The moves are just as imaginative as that classic, but the animation lets it down. In fact the whole thing is a rather sub standard package which is actually a real shame because it was a potentially great idea.



Selecting your opponent from a host of double dutch names like Old Hag is a nightmare



Air Norway being notoriously delayed by bad weather, Odin disguises himself as a raven to visit earth



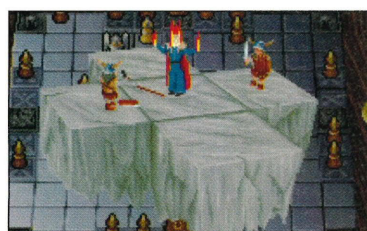
And good triumphs over evil in the end. Hold on - it's only a board game



Click on a piece with the disembodied hand to move it



Starting positions. The whites surround their king in the centre while the blacks guard the edges



When you take a piece, blocks of stone appear, supporting animated battle to the death

## appraisal

**R**esembling an ancient Chinese game called Go, this board game can get tactical and addictive. You become involved in beating a high standard of computer opposition, which unfortunately has no difficulty levels. Of the two games

available, Kings Table with two player option is not as much fun as the challenge of being Odin at Ragnarok. Unfortunately, the graphics are poor and the gameplay is clumsy which seems to let the whole package down.

DAVID LONGWORTH

PCA SCORE **66%**

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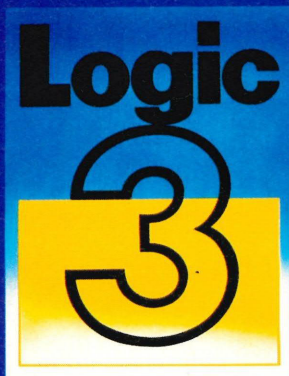
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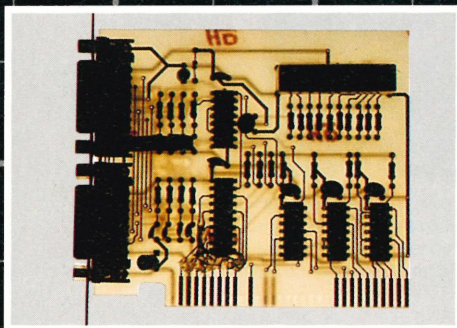
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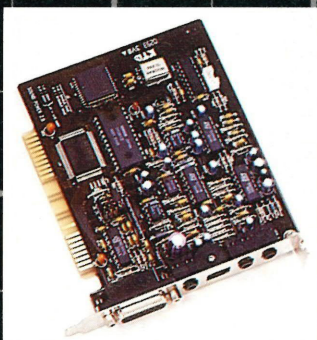
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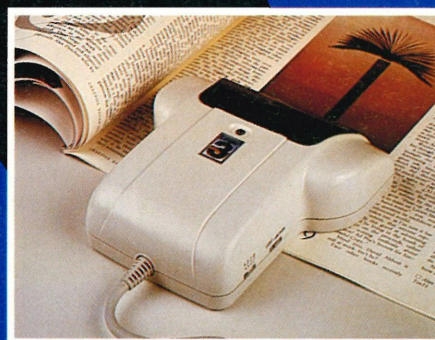
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## A-TRAIN

Maxis have become world renowned for their simulations. They first brought SimCity to the PC, a game that kept many people awake for whole weekends building large metropolises. Later on from the same stable came SimEarth, SimLife, plus many differentiations from other companies trying to imitate, but often failing miserably.

Now, revamped as a budget title, A-Train rises once again to tempt you at playing a near god with the ability to control railroads and indulge in local development to become one of the most notorious tycoons you could ever possibly imagine.

Through SimCity it was possible to set everything up automatically, making it simplicity itself to place an industrial area here, a residential area there without battering an eye-lid. With A-Train things have become a little more complex.

For example before you even think about purchasing a train you must consider where you want to lay a track. Putting it in a certain area may mean high initial costs, leaving you unable to afford a locomotion. In other areas it may become impossible to lay track because woodland is much too thick and dense.

When track has been laid it is time to purchase your first engine. Here things can become complicated. You must decide which type you want and where to place it on the track. For example a heavy train may be needed for large amounts of pulling in industrial areas.

Further still you cannot just have a track and a locomotion and walk away thinking your community will grow from this. You must then decide how to develop your surroundings for your ecosystem to prosper.

From this outlay it is possible to place sights such as golf courses, commercial areas and housing estates. Place these close to your line and your system will last. Put them some distance away from your railroad, somewhere in the nether regions and your structure may not last for more than half an hour.

As you can tell, the complexities of the game are intricate, but do the sound and graphics match this? As usual Maxis have taken to their Satellite view where you peer down at the land from an angle. The graphics are small and precise and extremely well animated. The sound has a lot to be desired with a tune being pushed through a relevant sound card plus some small irritating spot effects coming from the PC speaker.

A-Train is about five times more complicated than its older brother. There is so much to consider when laying just one block of track. Is the land yours? Do you want to develop the area? Are you in the right place? The list can go on. However, like most games to follow the SimCity vein, there seems to be an unexplained something missing.

But this game does have something special about it lifting it above the normal mould that Maxis have created. It is an enthralling simulation that will require a bit of time spending on it before it can be mastered. Getting a second chance as a budget title could turn the game into something it could have been. However with the imminent release of SimCity 2000 it may have to hide in the shadows yet again.

**The Hit Squad £19.99**

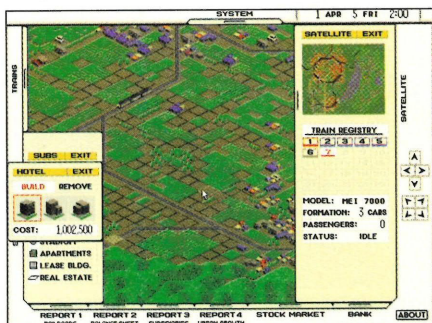
★★★★☆

## SIMANT

Ants are everywhere. They are the epitome of creepy crawliness, the stuff that nightmares are made of. But hardly the subject of an exciting game, we're afraid. So this is either a valiant attempt to give the vertically challenged but highly industrious insects a good press, or an over-dramatisation of their hum drum existence, depending that is on what your point of view is.

Biologists should be scientifically satisfied with this life cycle of the

hymenopterous insects, since maps, charts and graphs display everything from scent distribution to the status of your colony. The impression that you're watching Wildlife on One soon disappears as the game becomes a type of strategic war game, the aim being to consolidate your own base and destroy the



enemy. Picking up green globules of food and building with little pieces of stone, you could make an impressive rockery, but there's no time to hang around or the evil red ants will attack you and rip all your legs off. A nasty end, but not as bad as falling into the mouth of the monstrous ant-eater!

It's OK for you, you yellow ant – you get reincarnated every time you die – but if you lose ground and food to the enemy then your black ants will starve. The control of your colony is therefore of the utmost importance, which means sending out messages to your colony to forage more so they don't starve, or moulding the balance of the colony so there are more breeders of soldiers.

It looks very primitive and although the gameplay is quite smooth, it doesn't seem that way because everything is on such a small scale. Underground sections resemble all those old burrowing games, while above ground stands a painfully square, naff-looking house with a tiled green lawn and an annoying kid who strolls around telling us how hungry he is. The ant's mission is to establish itself in the house, what a nightmare for the occupant.

**The Hit Squad £17.99**

★★★★☆

## TRIVIAL PURSUITS

Who damaged his cruciate ligaments in the 1991 FA Cup final? Gazza of course. We actually knew that, honest, it just slipped out of our minds when you asked. But it doesn't matter with Domark's PC conversion of that national pastime – the computer reveals the answer, then asks you if you got it right, so there's plenty of opportunity for cheating. Well, it was at the forefront of our thoughts so that's near enough.

But what could be a sensible computerisation of all that data tries to add a little extra something, in this case in the shape of a Magnus Magnusson lookalike Buzzard who keeps telling you that you should be on Mastermind. The irritating compere moves from the living room to a lecture theatre complete with overhead projector and on to his study where he plays the piano for the only worthwhile innovation of the game, the musical section of the entertainment round. He's no Tom O'Connor

though and when you correctly identify Loch Lomond, the cheeky compere retorts – 'even I knew that one'.

But nothing, not even a cheeky scavenging bird, could detract from the clever imaginative questions, several sets of which are on offer. What features are oversized



on a Macrotoous radio enthusiast? The ears of course. The problem is that unless there's a bunch of us crowding round the monitor – and then we might as well be playing the real game – the actual mechanics of moving round the board are redundant. So they are bound to lose whichever way the game is aimed.

**The Hit Squad £12.99**

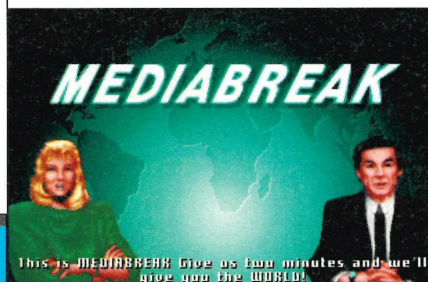
★★★★☆

## ROBOCOP 3

His mighty metalness hasn't actually released a third film in this country yet, but that didn't stop them making a game of it. In fact there are supposed to be two games on three discs, but the movie version looks

remarkably similar to the arcade adventure.

You don't need to know the script really, just where the fire button is and how long you have to complete the mission. For the record, Omni Consumer Products are trying to clear Old Detroit to make way for the development of Delta



City and council officers called Rehabs are throwing people out on to the street. Robo is stuck in the middle, torn between keeping the police chief happy with his blasted prime directives and his promise to his agent to keep his good guy image.

Five bland arcade sections consist of locating and destroying seemingly endless hordes of Splatterpunks, the hoodlums of tomorrow. If only Robo's designers had shown a little foresight in his design, then 'cleansing the streets' of all the scum could have been much easier. The action takes to the streets in car chases and even to the skies thanks to the Gyrocycle. This is no exercise bike, nor the time it takes for your dole cheque to arrive, but is in fact the latest in jetpack technology.



Unfortunately the latest technology has not been applied elsewhere in the game. Old Detroit should be called Polygon City, for all the prefabricated huts they have built here. And the people, hoodlums and hostages alike, are in fact two dimensional cardboard cut-outs. You control your high-tech robot with a primitive, temperamental gunsight and are offered various angles on things.

Very disappointing overall, considering the classic platform rendition of the game given to the consoles. Like one of the quality Sunday newspapers, it has an unwieldy number of different sections and the drivelt tends to weigh down the class features in a populist attempt to cover every angle. And the American newscasters who present the whole thing, MediaBreak, are so annoyingly wacky that you almost wish Robo would break into their headquarters and gun them all down on air.

**The Hit Squad £12.99**

★★☆☆☆

## SPEEDBALL2

This futuristic football sim really has been around for yonks, and its reputation brings with it a terrific trumpet fanfare and a host of Speedball fanatics rushing up and challenging you to a two player game.

That's the first thing, the fact that it has stood the test of time – two or three years on most formats and still arousing wild enthusiasm from all quarters. The corollary of this is that, unlike many sports sims, you can play this until your fingers are sore without your head hurting too much. The reason for all this? Smooth, quality gameplay and a bold, well executed game concept.

That's what ultimately makes a classic game – ideas. And this no rules, non-stop furious football fantasy is packed full of good ideas. A hockey-style pitch, with American football-style passing and Aussie rules-style fouling. The surface looks like steel, feels like ice and hurts like hell. The players' suits of armour are set off by the metallic looking power-ups and the permanent bonus fixtures around the pitch.

Power-ups are just right – not too many, nor too sparse – and unlike the cherries and apples of other games, they actually contribute to the gameplay. So when you throw the ball up the ramp of the score multiplier, it spirals round like on a pinball table and lights up red and blue indicators meaning that one player's goals will be worth more points.

You could still play without making use of the power-ups. They just add a little extra depth to the game. The player management section fulfils a similar function. As you get to know the game more, training players, changing their positions or increasing their essential attributes by buying armour and weaponry become part of the fun.

Even the storyline fits in well. You play Brutal Deluxe, with hunky players called Stuart, Trevor and Nigel and though your opposition, with names like Raw Messiahs and Violent Desire, should be in heavy rock groups, they evoke a particular brand of Rollerball futuristic fantasy.

**Kixx XL £16.99**

★★★★☆

## THE SECRET OF MONKEY ISLAND

Originating from the tremendously successful LucasArts' stable, this really does have to be one of the best graphic adventures around and, despite its age, is certainly not looking dated. Only superseded by Indiana Jones: the Fate of Atlantis and its sequel LeChuck's Revenge, the tale is heavy with ribald humour and quirky puzzles that both delight and tease.

Guybrush Threepwood, the loveable protagonist has a dream. He wants to be a pirate. He thus sets out on an escapade around Scabb Island, accosting weird and wacky pirates and engaging in rib tickling conversations with a variety of citizens who can either help or hinder his progress. Sword fights need to be won and once Threepwood has mastered the art through diligent practise, he can then proceed to sail the seven seas with a motley crew in a bid to rescue the governor Marley. Moving from a bar brimming with drunken pirates, in and out of town



residences and alleyways, around forest land, even popping into a makeshift circus where he has to perform a feat of bravery, firing himself out of a cannon with a saucepan on his head for protection. And then onto an apparently deserted isle save for a settlement of native barbarians, our little man follows a traditional point and click routine with an extremely easy to use SCUMM interface.

Collecting just about anything he can lay his hands on and then using these objects, often in obscure combinations, when new puzzles raise their prickly heads, the humour of situations, characters and dialogues is what really makes this game come alive like no other.

LucasArts' newly released Day of the Tentacle and Sam and Max Hit the Road draw on this same approach which has proved to be successful time and time again. But there's nothing like returning to a golden oldie for some fond reminiscences. Thoroughly recommended, although it would be highly unlikely that you have not already touched upon this product.

**Kixx XL £16.99**

★★★★★

## JAMES POND 2 - ROBOCOD

Pond is a classic and very funny platformer, a spoof on the most suave



undercover agent. Imagine Viz's Billy the Fish on a platform without the crudity and you have Pond. Cheap gags abound and the scenery is decked with large hunks of toys, sweets and what looks like weetabix.

James Pond, licensed to gill, here sheds his tuxedo for a robotic suit

to become part fish, part robot. Arch enemy Dr. Maybe has taken over Santa's central toy factory in the North Pole and sabotaged a number of toys with lethal explosive, so Pond's mission is to explore the castle and find the missing penguins.

The whole thing sounds very childish, but the light-hearted, infantile atmosphere generated is just right for what is essentially a puerile concept – the platform cutesy. So for the kid in all of us, Pond has a Noddy-style car to ride around Toytown in, an Ivor the Engine train and an extendable body a bit like a Jack in a Box. The controls, like the game, are innovative, stretching to reach the platform and pulling yourself up.

But, like the real 007, Pond is not all gimmicks and the game never sacrifices gameplay for parody, with the result that level upon level is packed full of teddy bears, hippos and cream cakes. So if it's the fin you're after, the name's Pond, James Pond.

**Kixx XL £16.99**

★★★★☆



## RISKY WOODS

If you go down to the woods today, you're sure of a big surprise, but no surprises here. This is a standard platform game and some say it has no place on the PC. But if you feel like a little light relief from all those heavy duty adventures,

it is certainly a contender for your attention. Yes, it's a platformer, a rare occurrence on the PC.

But it's no lightweight. No siree. Heavy duty and hectic, Risky Woods has you charging around the most substantial of woods and hills, Rambo-style, hacking down everything in your path and taking no hostages. The skeletons and birds like nightmares from hell appear at such regular intervals that you scarcely have time to check your watch, something you need to do, as you are against the clock.

In this particular rendering of the platformer, power-ups are crucial to your success. Some turn the whole screen upside down, so that you are clinging to the ceiling, some make you invincible and others give you a fireball escort, destroying everything around. But most original of all are the power-downs – cherries and arrows which probably should look like exclamation marks or bombs. These take time or lives from you and are sometimes cunningly disguised as power-ups.

You also pick up eye keys which get you past the eye stones in your path and these mystic inventions house wonderfully realistic but ominously bloodshot blinking pupils. The aim is to free some guys trapped in stone statues and complete level upon level of shoot'em-up platform mania.

**Kixx XL £14.99**

★★★☆☆



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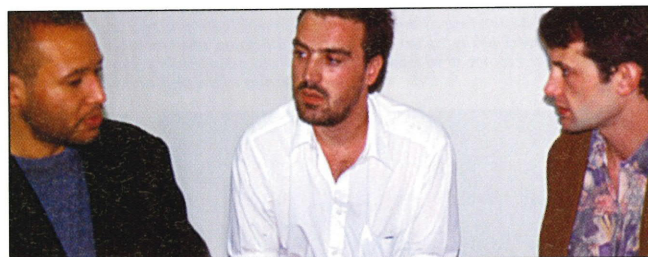
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# Delphine

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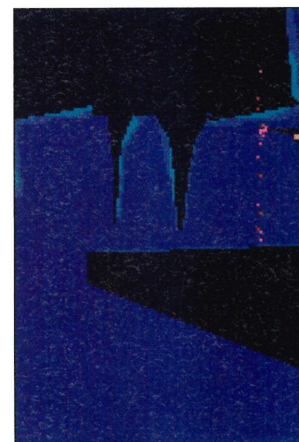


**Paris based Delphine Software,**  
**As an artist,**  
**continually striving to change**  
**a man has no**  
**the preconception of PC games,**  
**home in Europe**  
**are stepping out to a bright**  
**save Paris**  
**new French revolution...**

**↑** he heavy smell of Gauloise drifting from boulevard cafes mingles with that sweet smell of roasted chestnuts outside department stores and along the river Seine. Paris, dolled up to the nines in its best attire and make-up, embraces a Mecca of romance, mystery, nostalgia and all pervading chicness.

It is here that culture thrives, tradition joins hands with avant-garde notions and innovation is encouraged to spread its wings. What better place then to work, particularly in the computer games industry?

Since its infancy in the early '80s it has evolved at an alarming rate of knots and will continue to surprise and delight as new technology and an ever more experienced and talented base of game creators comes into ►







# Delphine

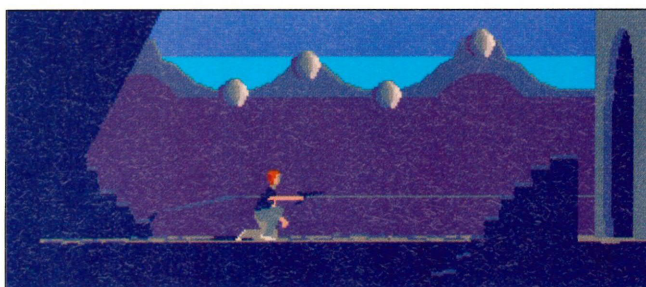
► the limelight. The three main french computer games magazines – Joystick, Tilt and Generation 4 – have their headquarters here. So too do design teams Microids and Cyro. But it is Delphine Software, established in 1988, that has received the most attention and subsequent acclaim on a worldwide basis. Even to such an extent that musician Peter Gabriel is currently in the midst of negotiations with the company to make an interactive game to accompany his next quirky music video.

So, 1994 looks to be no exception on the success scale. Plus ça change, plus c'est la même could well be the unspoken philosophy on which the company hinges.

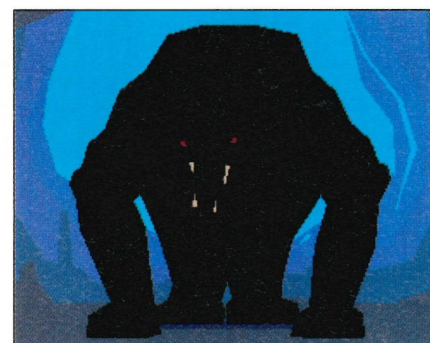
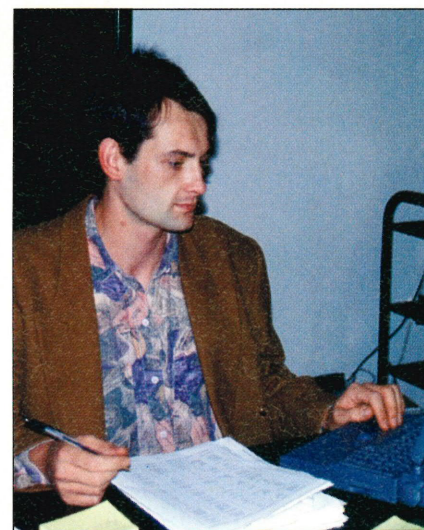
As technology has updated itself, a Silicon Graphics workstation and Softimage software have been drafted into the Delphine equation. This allows the designers to work in 16 million colours and venture down the very same avenues as Industrial Light and Magic (ILM), the US company responsible for the special effects in Jurassic Park, The Abyss and Terminator 2.

As such the artists have the power of equipment to realise the extent of their ambitions graphics-wise, while simultaneously still concentrating on that all-important gameplay. In this way they can adapt to new trends in the market-place while keeping tight hold of good gaming traditions.

Delphine's Paris base (there is another in Lyon and three in the US) lies just north of the Seine in a quiet courtyard off a long and busy



**Above:** While experimenting with sub-atomic particles, young scientist Lester Chaykin's laboratory is struck by a stray bolt of lightning and he finds himself transported to another dimension, a dimension heavy with danger and laden with atmospheric vibes. Here Lester must battle his way through a multitude of levels, only similar in the way that they test the unwilling adventurer to the very edge of his nerves **Right:** The artists and programmers examine their work in the Delphine Software Paris based offices **Below Right:** Deep in labyrinthine caverns, vigilance is called for. Who knows what may be lurking beyond the next stalagmite, the next curvature of the surroundings in which our protagonist finds himself **Below:** Even in the very first scene of the game, alien monsters give hearty chase. Death comes all too readily if Lester fails to tread warily and plan his strategies to the best of his ability



boulevard. A plush building, that has expanded from 65 square metres to 400 in the space of three years, it houses the design, programming and marketing teams as well as an en suite music studio where all the necessary sounds and effects are produced for the games.

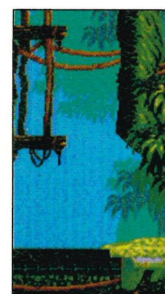
In 1989, Operation Stealth, an interactive adventure game set in the heady world of international espionage, released on the Amiga, Atari and PC, first raised the teething company to its knees. Cruise for a Corpse, following in '91 won the 'Tilt d'Or' magazine award for best French adventure game and, in the process, gave Delphine some solid legs to stand on.

Towards the end of this very same year, Another World emerged out of nowhere, scooping up a myriad of awards in both France and the US. The stage was then set for success to topple over success in the adventure/arcade

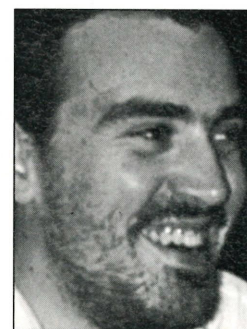
game genre. Flashback, a summer '93 release on the Amiga, PC and Sega Mega Drive, didn't disappoint either.

'Another World is similar to Dragon's Lair in some respects,' comments Victor Perez, PR and marketing person. By this he means that it consists of set cinematic style sequences that take away some of the interaction and freedom of the player. Best described as an arcade adventure, the plot tells of a young scientist, Lester Chaykin, who's suddenly transported into another dimension. There, in a startlingly dangerous world, he must summon all the intelligence and training he can muster to survive.

Striking in its visual impact and unmarred by Full Motion Video (it uses a polygon animation technique), it was this graphical approach that sowed the seeds for Flashback. This is a game which takes full advantage of the rotoscoping effect – a member of the team was filmed and



**FIRST OF ALL I DRAW EVERYTHING ON PAPER  
AND ONLY WHEN IT HAS BEEN FINALISED DO I  
THEN SCAN IT IN. THIS ALLOWS ME TO REFLECT  
ON WHAT I'M DOING AND PLAN THE EFFECTS. I  
MIGHT DO FIVE OR SIX SKETCHES FOR ONE  
GESTURE. YOU HAVE TO GET ACCUSTOMED TO WORKING  
WITH MINUTE DETAIL TO MAKE SOMETHING WORK**



OURA MAMA, GRAPHIC ARTIST FOR BLUE SPHERE





**Above:** The team behind Flashback, relaxing in their work abode. Among them are programmer Philippe Chastel and graphic artists, Thierry Perreau and Jerome France **Left:** Flashback, released in the summer of '93 and hailed as a benchmark product on the PC in that it brings to this format an arcade type approach, never seen before

**Below:** During the course of the game Conrad Hart has to relocate his memory and negotiate his way through a veritable maze of levels



then these movements transferred to the computer screen to obtain the film-like quality of movement that works so well.

'I've always preferred synthetic images because they're more in keeping with the idea

of playing a game. Real moving images are best kept to the TV,' says Victor, undeniably proud of Flashback. 'In this game you have the freedom to do as you wish and there are several avenues down which to go to finalise a certain puzzle which allows unlimited freedom rather than the player being

restricted to following a predefined course.'

Victor is even prouder of the means by which the game was produced. 'Paul Cuisset is the man behind the whole project. He is entirely self taught. Before creating the game he learnt to programme, did intensive research on graphics and put the whole package together. It took him two and a half years of intensive work.'

The game traces the steps of investigator Conrad Hart. Following his discovery that prominent political people are in fact alien clones, his mind is erased by these powers that be and he's then unceremoniously dumped in Another World, so to speak. The search for his memory begins.

As an essentially arcade idea and thus taking a wholly different approach to what has so far been seen on the PC, everyone involved in the project stated that the game evolved

intuitively. A different approach was deliberately taken. Now that the game is well established on a cross section of formats, it is pencilled in for an updated release on the Mega CD and almost certainly a PC CD-Rom version will follow before the sequel, destined for a late '94 release.

Delphine's second design team, Blue Sphere, work out of house and they have recently finished putting the final touches to a game called In Extremis. This is a complementary mélange of adventure, action and role-playing in a similar vein to the Wolfenstein type scenario.

What makes this team unique is that it consists of just three men. This is their first project on which they started work 18 months ago. Previously, financial constraints and also lack of state-of-the-art computer equipment has installed a modicum of fear into their work, making them reluctant to try anything new in case it failed to work. 'You really do need to be affiliated to, or at least have connections with a publishing house,' comments Ouro Mama, the team's graphic artist.

'For over a year we worked entirely independently but just didn't have the financial means at our disposal. When the game was nearly finished we looked into ways of taking it one step further and Delphine ▶

## Back tracking

Although they do not necessarily mature with age, games on the PC don't date as readily as

they do on other computer formats, hence the prolific abundance of budget releases. Delphine Software International's games over the last couple of years have undergone the price reduction treatment before then being

distributed through Kixx XL, a branch of US Gold.

Some titles to look out for:

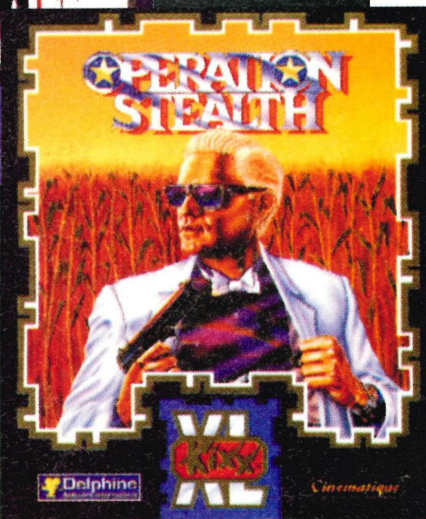
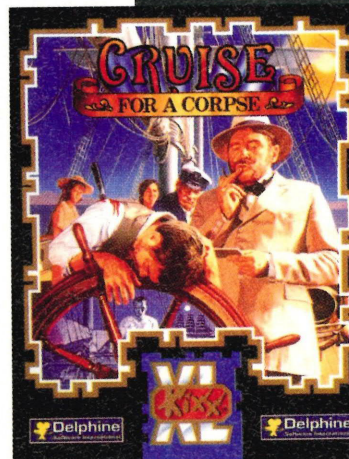
**1989: Operation Stealth.** The winner of the best French game of this year and the best French adventure game.

**1991: Cruise for a Corpse.** The VGA 256 colours version follows six months later. For this game Delphine wins the title of best French company.

**1992: Another World.** After a great deal of television publicity it is awarded best action/adventure game, best animation and best

original action game.

**1993:** The emergence of Flashback. To date, still a full price title.







# Delphine

deeper

► proved to be the most interested publishing party. They respect authors and give them overall freedom to do as they want rather than forcing them to change this here, that there and the other.'

In *Extremis* has already arrived in France. We are still waiting in Britain. The tale tells of the detection of an extra terrestrial spaceship. Bob Jones, your run-of-the-mill space patrol man is summoned to monitor this apparition.

It is imperative to not lose contact until a team of specialists arrive to survey proceedings but just as Bob has the question of 'specialists of what' bubbling on the tip of his tongue, early signs of a breakdown in communications become noticeable. Only two possible solutions can be taken.

He can either stop events and engage in repair work or, alternatively, run the risk of an explosion and make ground on the phantom vessel. Of course, the first wouldn't form the premise for a good game and so he sets off in hot pursuit to make entry into a totally unknown dimension.

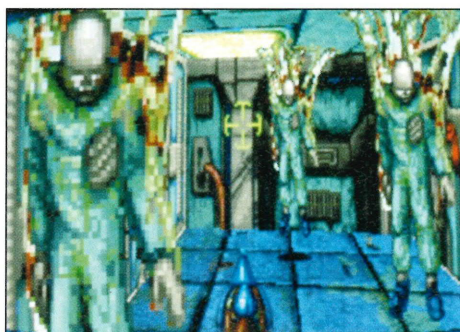
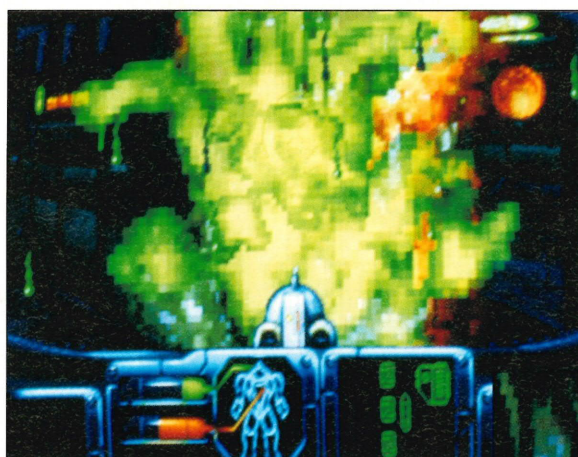
And so begins *In Extremis*. What does a scarcely comprehensible video message left by a member of the team signify? Does 'Press the auto-destruction button and then get the hell out of there' really beat about the bush?

During the course of this adventure a true gamut of enemy intruders come and accost the player who needs to navigate around a wealth of labyrinthine mazes, find magnetic keys that allow access to new rooms and amass weapons, while simultaneously keeping a watch on oxygen levels.

The game itself boasts 21 rooms in the first section, while the second part increases the number of rooms up until the 15th level and at the same time steps up the level of difficulty.

'I began out in 1986 and worked for Atari,

**Above:** The three man Blue Sphere team: Orou Mama, Cyril Trevoan and Erwan Bodenan **Below:** Marc Minier offers a mini guided tour of the music studio. **Far Right:** Victor Perez, Delphine's PR and marketing guy at the Paris base



mainly on adventure games,' explains Ouro. 'I did *Ironlord* three years ago which sold well in France and in the States, not so much in Britain. Work on *In Extremis* began with just a two man team.

'There are very few arcade games on the PC and they are still not very well received so we had to do our research well. I enjoy RPGs such as *Might and Magic* and arcade games in the *Sonic the Hedgehog* mould. I like to immerse myself into an adventure and have a definite goal to attain.

Hopefully this will come across in the game.

'*In Extremis* is made to be very easy to play. On consoles the games are very simple and I don't see why we can't follow this simplicity on the PC.'

Orou, responsible for the visual appeal of the game feels the need to refer to a lot of documentation to help him with illustrations, not to copy, but to be able to take note of how to draw effects, how shards of light fall for example. It is this detail that really counts.

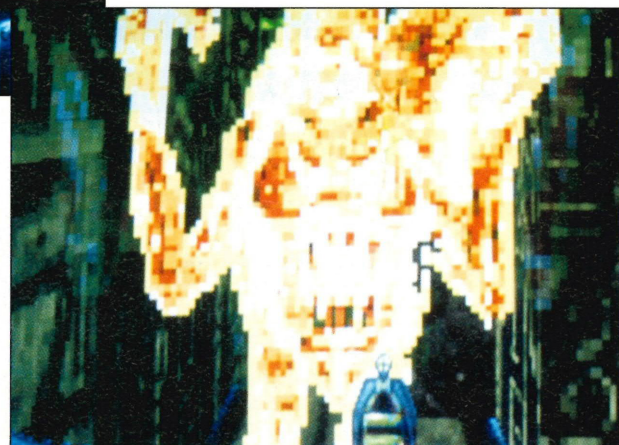
For example, drawing a monster is relatively easy, personalising it is the hardest part. Books therefore make ideal reference material for how to draw the eyes and to amass a complete index of colours and light and dark sources.

'I've always liked a lot of detail, even before embarking on game design. If you do something in colour before transferring it to the screen it never turns out the same colour.'

Now the project is finished and available in other European territories it's down to Birmingham based US Gold to take control of the marketing and distribution of the game in Britain. It's very difficult to follow the same ploys abroad because they appeal to different sensibilities and cultures that may respond in a number of different ways.

US Gold have always been Delphine's British

**Left:** In *Extremis*, as yet unreleased in Britain, comes from new development team Blue Sphere, now affiliated with Delphine. A blend of role-play, action and arcade ideas, the main core of action balances on a hack 'n' slash approach **Below Left:** Navigate around room after room, find keys to allow for greater freedom of movement and remember, watch your back. Aliens are aboard this particular space ship, eager for a slice of the action **Below Right:** As an extra terrestrial approaches, a trigger happy response is best advised and the creature will then explode in a tremendous blaze of glory



right hand man but now the French company is looking to expand even further and are in the process of embarking on a new and, still shrouded in secrecy, project for Electronic Arts.

The game will be a beat'em-up of sorts to which EA have bought a licence in the States. Present estimates put the cost of game production at around six million dollars.

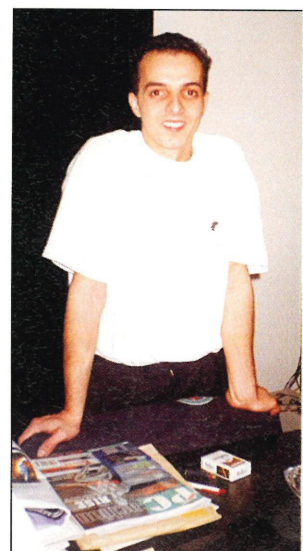
Maybe much of this is due to the fact that Shaq O'Neal, seven foot basketball player extraordinaire and big publicity magnate to boot, especially when it comes to advertising Reeboks and Pepsi, has been introduced into this particular computer games arena. Already his special brand of moves have been filmed on video and the game will then proceed to be developed using Silicon Graphics.

The last, but by no means final, bee in Delphine's collective bonnet is the procurement of their new subsidiary company, Adeline Software, renowned for creating the greatly feted *Alone in the Dark*.

Based in Lyon, they are currently in the throes of perfecting a new 3D adventure game by reprogramming the *Alone in the Dark* engine for a 3D rendered story similar to that of the role-playing game *Zelda* that has been circulating on console platforms for several years now. The game, of which news is still in the fuzzy stage, is scheduled for a May time release.

Not only here, but in all Delphine products past and future is it abundantly clear that where the tradition of engrossing and easily accessible gameplay meets with avant-garde technological notions, a noteworthy product is virtually always guaranteed. As they say, plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose.

SHARON GREAVES





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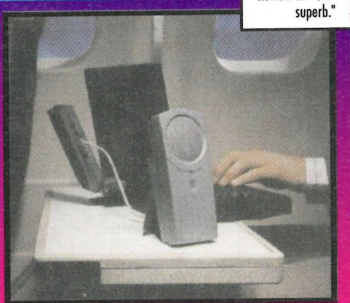
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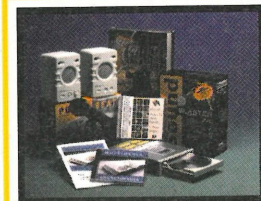
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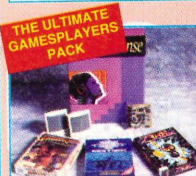
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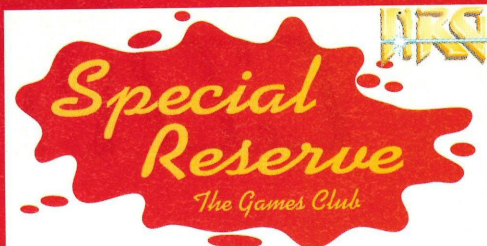
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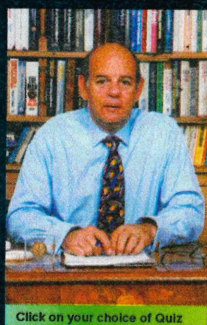
**Sigma Designs, the company** at the cutting edge of multimedia entertainment with the revolutionary ReelMagic card that affords gamers the luxury of playing with full screen, full motion and full colour video and CD quality sound, is in the process of cementing its important launch into the European market.

A major deal has been signed with PC giant Wearnes. The outcome means that Wearnes will be bundling ReelMagic with its highly regarded range of multimedia PCs. Silvio Perich, vice president of international sales at Sigma rightly comments: 'We are particularly pleased to have finalised this agreement with Wearnes, a major force in the worldwide manufacture and distribution of personal computer and related multimedia products.'

Not content with this feather in the Sigma Design cap, Reelmagic is also going to be bundled with PC manufacturer's Dells popular Dimension range.

'Dimension XPS customers are looking for the latest and greatest in computer technology. As full motion video and other entertainment technologies merge onto the desktop, Dell will be right there and partners like Sigma Design will be helping us get there,' adds Sean Burke, director of product marketing and planning.

Microcosm's, Lovers Guide and the Kings Quest Collection are just two of the growing stock of titles that are supporting ReelMagic. In fact, it has commitments from 31 of the worlds leading entertainment developers, which is an indication of just how successful the playback card is intended to be.



### Who are you?

Are you -  
• Tough / Tender-minded?  
• Emotionally Stable?  
• Extrovert or Introvert?

and are you -  
• A Giver or a Taker?  
• Sexually Satisfied?  
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### But are you -

• Confident - or Not?

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• Aware of the Differences between Men and Women?

• With the Right Partner?

• In Love?

Click on your choice of Quiz

**Above Right:**  
Boldly go where no game has gone before, aboard the USS Enterprise

**Far Right:**  
Another World interdimensioned travel takes our explorer into a savage, alien world

**Below Right:**  
Chess comes alive with fully animated graphics

**Right:**  
Bilbo Baggins and Gandalf explore Middle Earth

**Right The Professor** at the end of the Lover's Guide quizzing you on what you've learnt

## Class Act

Ever wondered about whether it would be worthwhile to purchase a CD drive? Ever questioned the playability of the newest CD-Rom games emerging in the market place?

No one can doubt the storage facility of a CD and the benefits of added music and sound FX and enhanced graphics. Now, to give potential buyers a push in the right direction, Interplay are launching a superb value for money classic collection CD package. This will include a grand total of 10 titles, all bundled together and offering the discerning player a feast of action, strategy and adventure.

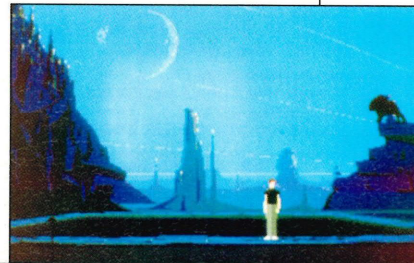
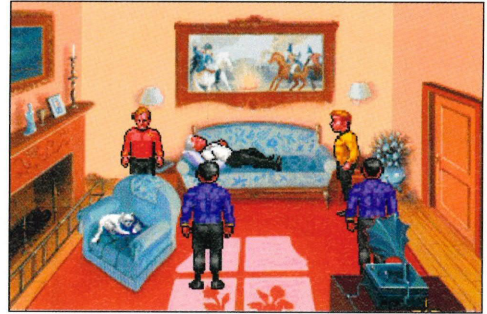
These releases are drawn from the last 10 years and have received a great deal of acclaim on floppy. The most prominent in the collection is **Star Trek: 25th Anniversary** - an action adventure foray that has enough charm to entice even non-trekkies as well as the die-hard fans of the TV series.

Once beamed aboard that faithful USS Enterprise, you'll experience a 3D action blast through the cosmos, playing around with warp drives and photon torpedoes before sending out parties to explore uncharted terrains.

Another out of this world title is in fact **Another World**. Winner of numerous awards, it consists of progressive sequences of movie-style action as you control a scientist as he battles against monsters and traps and hidden surprises.

**Battlechess** and **Lord of the Rings** also feature in the collection, as does **Mindshadow**, **Tass Times**, **Bard's Tale**, **Wasteland**, **Dragon Wars** and **Castles** - a mixed bag to be sure.

The 10th Anniversary Anthology is shortly due out from Interplay, but it is only available for a limited period.



**Mindscape**, based in the South of England are busy putting the final touches to their latest role-playing adventure game entitled **Dragon Tales**.

As the name suggests, the plot revolves around commanding dragons and leading them into victory against all manner of foe, your ultimate aim being to rescue the beautiful princess. There is plenty of action to keep you hooked for ages, including jousting matches, evil knights and other unfriendly dragons.

The game is being written by Cryo of Dune fame and promises some of the most spectacular 3D animation, sound effects and synchronized speech to bring the many characters and monsters to life.

The backdrops have also been superbly designed, using improved 3D rendering techniques which draw the player into the mythical world and hold them there.

Although Dragon Tales will be available on floppy, Mindscape are promising that the CD version will also be available, while they assure us that it will blow the players mind away.

So how are they going to do it? We are not too sure about that, but you can expect to see even more luscious graphics and better sound hitting the screen.

Mindscape are expecting to have Dragon Tales finished and on the shelves around Summertime.

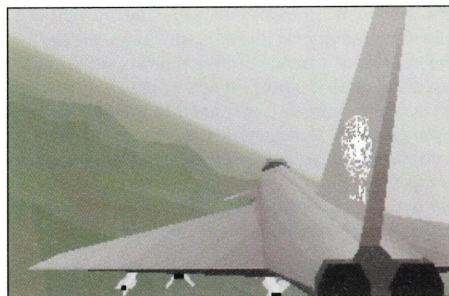


**As the CD becomes ever more popular an increasing number of floppy-based games are being converted onto this medium. Some have no improvements, while others exploit the CD's potential to the full. PC Action has decided to include a brief mention of these re-releases because, although they do not warrant full reviews they do contain elements unseen and unheard in the floppy version. Each CD game is rated out of five stars – five being an essential buy, three fairly average and one a game to avoid at all costs.**

### TFX – TACTICAL FIGHTER EXPERIMENT

TFX from Ocean and developed by Digital Image Design (D.I.D) in Runcorn, has received much critical acclaim and looks set to be one of the most highly praised releases of 1994. Featuring state of the art 3D graphics and some of the most realistic animation seen in a computer game, TFX offers the player the chance to fly the latest in fighter aircraft on behalf of the United Nations.

The game contains several areas of conflict each with its own appropriate set of military vehicles, planes, campaigns and targets.



TFX is the first flight simulation to utilize what has been labelled Virtual Flying, where the pilot, his craft and the landscape all move in accordance with gravity irrespective of

each other. The experience of Virtual Flying is a little hard to explain but one that you'll never forget.

The CD-Rom version features the same intense missions and superb graphics but has been updated in order to utilise the storage bonus of CD. D.I.D have added several new missions that don't appear on the floppy version and have created more animated sequences which are implemented in between the flight action. There is also an extensive amount of speech added which enhances the already realistic atmosphere that TFX creates.

The speech and extra animation are something we have come to expect from CD but it is the extra missions that really set TFX CD above its floppy counterpart. It's good to see a software developer making real use of CD-Rom's potential which has been pretty much neglected, or misunderstood in the past.

TFX is the first game so far that actually warrants upgrading to a CD-Rom and even if you have the floppy version it is worth spending the extra cash for something that not only offers the same challenges but extra ones as well. TFX is a good example of how the CD-Rom should be used in the future.

**Ocean Software**

★★★★★

### GOBLINS 3

The Goblins series from Coktel Vision adds a new twist to the puzzle genre of computer games. The first in the series introduced the Goblin world and the characters within it as well as the kind of puzzles that Goblin adventurers would come across in the series.

The basic idea of all three games is that the player controls several Goblins and must guide them through a selection of screens each with their own particular brand of puzzles to solve. In order to progress through the game the puzzles must be solved correctly and the Goblins kept alive. What is most memorable about the series is the great attention to the humour element. The Goblins are given characters of their own and they act them out to the full, sniggering

at the other's errors and yelling with anger if things don't quite go their way.

The third Goblins game is by far the best, offering plenty of animated sequences and puzzles that can be solved on a progressive level. The CD version offers little extra in the playability stakes but



does include fully digitized speech for the animated sequences that explain the storyline as it happens. It would have been nice to see the storage capacity of CD better used – a few more levels, for example would

have been welcome and as such there is little incentive for an owner of the floppy version to rush out and buy the CD version.

While software houses continue to devote little time or effort to the CD-Rom, the advantages of this medium will never be fully realised. The best way to maximize its potential is to increase the size of the floppy version in respect of the amount of levels, speech and animation, and with this in mind the developers of Goblins 3 CD have failed to harness that potential.

**Coktel Vision / Sierra**

★★★★☆

### DAY OF THE TENTACLE

For years now LucasArts have been hailed as the true supremos of adventure gaming. Since the early days of Zak McKracken and Maniac Mansion the company have always succeeded to brush aside those who would try to copy it.

LucasArts tell us that they are taking the CD-Rom very seriously and



definitely see it as the future storage medium for computer games. This philosophy has already seen the light of day in Rebel Assault – a CD-Rom only game. However, like many other companies around,

LucasArts seem to be missing the real true value of CD.

Day of the Tentacle, or DOTT as it has become affectionately known is the latest floppy to CD conversion that LucasArts have done, the previous one being Indiana Jones and the Fate of Atlantis, and although the game has remained the same as the floppy version, LucasArts have incorporated full speech throughout.

Day of the Tentacle is one example where gameplay and animation can be only slightly improved. This is an indication of the talent that LucasArts employs and where digitized speech can be used to maximise the atmosphere of the game.

The introduction sequence, which runs for approximately ten minutes has full speech throughout but as soon as the player takes control the speech ends and he or she is shown the familiar text messages. While this is certainly adequate, it does tend to diminish any initial excitement.

However, with the CD version incorporating full speech throughout, the game's excitement is maintained at an all time high. Now, instead of having to read messages you can sit back and listen to the characters reel their lines out, allowing you to pay closer attention to the animation on screen.

If you're looking for state of the art CD technology you won't find it in Day of the Tentacle but if you are after playing an enhanced version of what is already a superb game, the CD version of this LucasArts classic will suit you down to the ground. Certainly a game to get your teeth into.

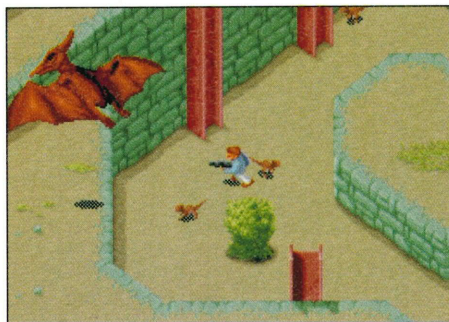
**US Gold**

★★★★★



## ► JURASSIC PARK

As far as movie licences go, Jurassic Park has to be Ocean's biggest success story to date. Although the game doesn't really follow the film too closely it still contains the same dino-atmosphere found in its movie counterpart written by Michael Crichton and Steven Spielberg.



Jurassic Park the game is basically split into two sections. The first is an overhead arcade affair in which the player must rescue two children and kill any dinosaurs that stray too close. Once the

children have been rescued the player must then guide them to the visitors centre where the second part of the game comes into play.

The second section features a 3D, first person perspective view much like that seen in Spear of Destiny. The dinosaurs come thick and fast, as do the puzzles which will eventually allow all the participants to leave the visitors centre and head for safety.

To be honest, Ocean seem to have spent very little time improving the CD version of Jurassic Park and it is almost identical to the floppy version. There is an animated introduction sequence which is reasonable but doesn't really show off the advantages of CD. As far as extra sound effects go there are very few in the game and these are hardly noticeable at all.

If you already have the floppy version you're better off sticking with it and forgetting the CD game as there is not enough improvement to warrant forking out the extra cash.

★★★★☆

Ocean Software

## ALONE IN THE DARK

Infogrames revolutionized adventure gaming when Alone in the Dark



was first released. Instead of using sprite-based characters and hand drawn backgrounds Infogrames decided to use 3D characters and 3D rendered backdrops in order to create a greater sense of realism.

The plot revolves around a house that has been left empty after the owner mysteriously dies in strange circumstances. No one dare enter the house for it is rumoured to be haunted and full with creatures of the night. However, being a brave chap or woman, whichever you prefer, you feel compelled to investigate the contents of the house and discover its secret – your first big mistake!

There is very little difference, bar the extra sound in the CD version of Alone in the Dark but it does contain an extra goodie which the floppy version never contained called Jack In The Dark. This bonus game requires you to save the richest man in the world who has been imprisoned by Jack, the monster who dwells in Alone in the Dark 2.

This addition features the same superbly 3D animated characters and cinema-style camera angles seen in the main game and exploits the real use of CD which is storage capacity. Graphically it is amazing and draws the player in to the Cthulu-style atmosphere. There is also a good plot to keep you investigating for ages. Infogrames are the first company to realise the potential of CD in this way and hopefully other companies will follow by their example.

If you have the floppy version of Alone in the Dark it's probably worthwhile purchasing the CD version simply to collect Jack In The Dark. If you haven't even got the floppy version and have a CD drive you cannot afford to miss out on this game!

Infogrames

★★★★★

## HUMANS

Everybody at some point must have heard the phrase Shovelware. It is where a manufacturer gets one of their titles and thinks, ooh this game could do with a bit of a relaunch, let's stick it on a CD and say wow this is really great. Well, that is what has happened to Humans from Gametek.

Well, it has almost happened with Humans. What they have actually got round to doing is spruce it up a little bit (dare one use that word), with a few extra megabytes of hilarious animations and then they have shovelled it on to the CD.

It's not that 14Mb of data needs to be placed on a CD in the first



place. That's right you read it correctly, a mere 14Mb of CD space has been consumed with this absolutely appalling multimedia conversion. And most of this is because the game comes complete with

different language versions, while the animations aren't all that fantastic either.

As for hilarious? They are about as funny as Little and Large. Each small animation is so short and so inexplicably crude you will wish you had stuck with the disk based version.

Just to recap on the gameplay. Humans was originally brought out at a time when people were hungry for a Lemmings clones. Indeed that is what the game is. Control a family of near mortals, one by one manipulating them to discover all kinds of objects of desire.

Although it doesn't sound too great, it managed to spawn a few data disks including the expected Jurassic series, a slight spin-off from the film of the same name. Still, if you are extremely rich and want to collect CD titles then this may be a game that you are after. For mere human beings (excuse the pun), and probably the entire world don't bother unless you are really interested or haven't got the floppy version yet.

For this section they should have renamed it fobbing off. This game was not too great when it first came out so who knows why they decided to bring it out on CD. What insults the intelligence further is the fact that only 14Mb of the CDs potential has been used. That's a paltry amount compared to most games and as I have said in the review it is near typical of shovelware programs, a phrase that I detest.

If you didn't get this game when it came out on floppy then, okay you may have a reason for buying this. However the way it has been presented with a few trashy animations that are about as exciting as receiving a set of Y-fronts for Christmas, I wouldn't even bother.

★☆☆☆☆

GameTek

## LOST IN TIME

Lost in Time, another of the many PC games based around time travelling released recently onto this new medium (see The Journeyman Project elsewhere in this issue). Starting its life on a set of floppies it was inevitable that this disk eating adventure would soon make its way on to CD.

In the game you play the female role of Doralice Prunelie who has been cast into the past, fighting to discover what took her there and why? Not only that, she also has to save somebody, but who? The



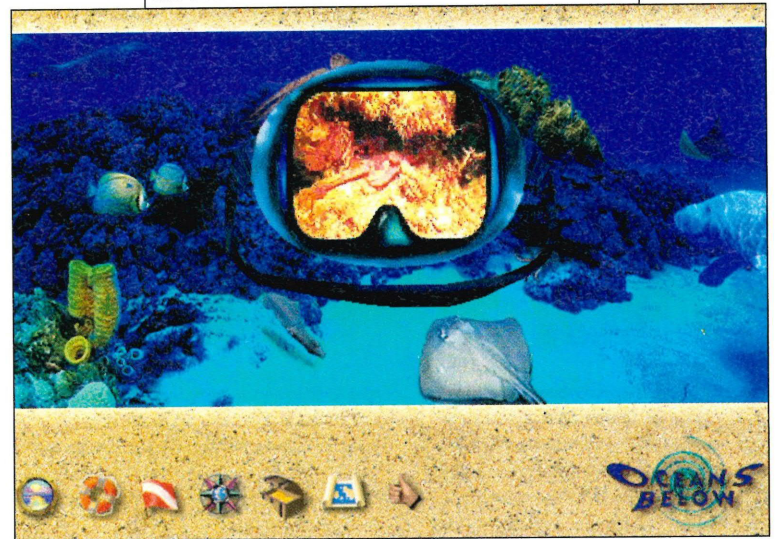
floppy version was fantastic, incorporating digitised speech and full motion video (FMV) but occupied far too much disk space.

So, has the wait for the CD version been worth while? Well now that question can be



## OCEANS BELOW

Dive below the sometimes murky depths of many oceans and view the local wildlife



answered in view of the enhancements that have been made. Unlike many software houses Coktel Vision have plumped for added extras rather than shovelling it on without a care as some unnamed companies have been known to do.

These enhancements have been made in the sound department. As is typical of most floppy to CD-Rom conversions general SoundBlaster music has been replaced with a beautifully orchestrated sound-track that constantly plays in the background.

For those that worried about the disk space consumed by its floppy brother they need not fear anymore. What used to demand acres of space will, on minimum installation take up around 16Mb.

This causes a set-back during play because every time you have finished a section or time zone, bang goes several minutes of time copying, as the CD places the next locations data on your hard drive.

And with that bang goes the atmosphere that had just been created. Unless you want to install the full 42Mb of data you are stuck with it. This is however a very small price to pay for what is already a truly excellent adventure.

The floppy version of this adventure was immensely enjoyable. The puzzles were round about par for anyone's intelligence. After playing the CD version however, the floppies seemed to be making their way to the bin. Although graphically the game has not improved, the aural effects have by about ten fold.

What was once general SoundBlaster music has been replaced with quality CD audio of the highest calibre, adding a new and more intriguing atmosphere to the game. If you are considering purchasing this adventure in the near future and you cannot decide whether to get the floppy or CD based game. Without a doubt the latter would be highly recommended. It may be a few pounds more but it is a hundred times better.

★★★★☆

Coktel Vision

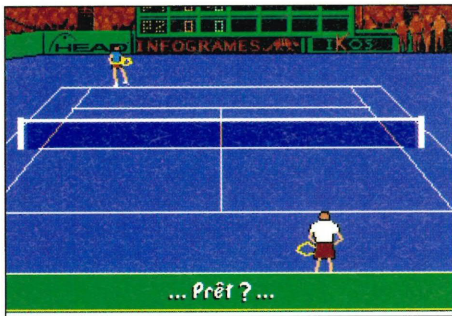
### ADVANTAGE TENNIS

Many companies seem to be noticing the niche in the CD-Rom market and placing many of their existing formats onto this medium. Advantage Tennis, was in its own time a fair game offering many standard features – some sharp gameplay and non too inspiring graphics. That begs the question why bring it out on to the CD format?

The game cannot be improved and neither can the graphics, unless you completely re-write the game engine. So what exactly has been

done? Well, as with most conversions the game now boasts a fully orchestrated CD musical score, adding a certain touch of professionalism to the game.

As mentioned earlier, don't be fooled into



thinking that CD can improve the playability of games – it can't.. The only advantages they have are their extra storage capacity which can be used to improve the graphics and sound effects of a game. You can store a fair amount of digitized footage on CD but what's the use of having this advantage when no PC can throw digitized landscapes around at a fast and smooth rate? CD is only a storage medium, not a hardware improvement or programming language.

Advantage still needs to be installed to your hard drive which is a bit pointless seeing as CDs are supposed to remove the need for this. The bright side being that it only takes up a mere 1.7Mb.

It still plays well with several tiny characters racing across the screen trying to hit that elusive ball. But simply adding a CD score is just not enough to condemn it to this medium, this particular outing certainly needs a lot more.

There are many tennis games available on floppy, most notably 4D Sports Tennis with its three dimensional graphics. Still, Advantage doesn't do too badly especially with the added bonus of the CD score. If you are looking for a game that delves into the sport, it may just whet your palette. If you are looking for something with a little more realism, look elsewhere. Anyone for tennis?

Infogrames

★★★★☆

PUBLISHER	Mindscape
CONTACT	0444 246333
TEAM	Software Toolworks
PRICE	£39.99
RELEASE DATE	Out Now

*'The sea has never been friendly to man. At most it has been the accomplice of human restlessness.'*

JOSEPH CONRAD 1857-1924

**W**elcome aboard for a cruise of the world's waters in an edutainment application/program that is supposed to entertain as well as teach you something you never knew. An excellent idea, but does it have a potential audience?

The system is presented through an easy to use interface that lets you select a destination from anywhere around the world. Depending on where you choose, this may be replaced by a local subsidiary of seas. For example, clicking on the Caribbean will take you down to the local area where several smaller pond-like areas can be found.

Once you have arrived at the required locale, you can check your diving equipment and possibly the state of the surrounding area before jumping off the side of your boat to the murky depths below. During the expedition you are treated to several different video clips of people diving down to the sea bed. This can be quite comical, watching several rubber clad people beckoning you to follow them.

Finally your destination has arrived. The bottom of the ocean has been reached and once again you gain control of a small cursor. This must be used to point at specific objects over the sea bed. Click on one and a small slice of film footage will appear showing you how that particular animal lives or moves through the waters.

For example clicking on a school of fish will produce a pair of snorkelling goggles with a short animated view of

those animals. Along the way you get the chance to look for shipwrecks, plane crashes and you may even encounter hidden treasure. All these are put on your imaginary yacht.

The program contains over 200 video clips and about 125 photographs of the regions, including underwater creatures, shipwrecks and more. The graphics are excellent with superb video footage of the wildlife. Although incredibly easy to use the program does have a restricted audience and may be viewed as only a space filler.

PAUL ASKEW

PCA SCORE **52%**

### data bank

MINIMUM MEMORY	580k
MINIMUM PROCESSOR	386
OPTIMUM SPEED	33Mhz
INSTALLATION	None
HARD DISK SPACE	None
GRAPHICS	VGA
SOUND CARDS	Soundblaster, ProAudio Spectrum
CONTROLS	Keyboard, Mouse



# THE JOURNEYMAN PROJE

PUBLISHER	Gametek
CONTACT	0753 553445
TEAM	Presto Studios
PRICE	£39.99
RELEASE DATE	Out Now

*'We must use time as a tool, not as a couch.'*

JOHN F. KENNEDY 1917-1963

Here is Pegasus, the machine that is going to transport you on your journeys through time



few menial non-taxing puzzles and the odd maze or two. It brings back thoughts of the game The 7th Guest.

Continuing the journey you will encounter all kinds of characters, including giant human-hating robots that can become a constant pain as well as a battling enemy.

times to solve them. And so events unfold as you begin an almost epic adventure through several time zones solving a variety of puzzles, including a bomb diffusal that has striking similarities to that great Mastermind board game.

However, it could appear that hidden behind the superb graphics and atmospheric music is little more than a

Moving on to the save game facility, this seems to fail every time you've saved a finished puzzle. For example if you return to a point at a later date that you have solved then you might be unfortunate enough to discover that it has no longer been solved and you must complete it yet again.

This is rather infuriating

## 'The way the game tackles the subject is harshly real'



## Take a wondrous ride through time from the prehistoric past to the worlds of the future

**T**he words Macintosh and games never seem to appear to mix well with some of the titles currently available. Therefore adventures that have been converted from this format to Windows should always be

approached with extreme caution, even award winners such as The Journeyman Project.

At the start of the adventure you find yourself in the year 2318 with a mission to complete – to correct in time what has been wronged. How do you know that something has gone amiss?

At the core of the story is that to keep track of time, a capsule is placed

somewhere in history, circa 200 million BC and contains the original facts of what happens on Earth on a day-to-day basis. This is a covert operation known as the Journeyman Project, hence the title of the game.

*When something appears* to have changed (a rip) in time and is detected by the computer system the disk is then retrieved by an agent for the bureaux via a machine called Pegasus. This is then compared to the one that is currently being updated to see when the problems have occurred.

Locate these places and you'll find yourself journeying back to the relevant

## INCA II

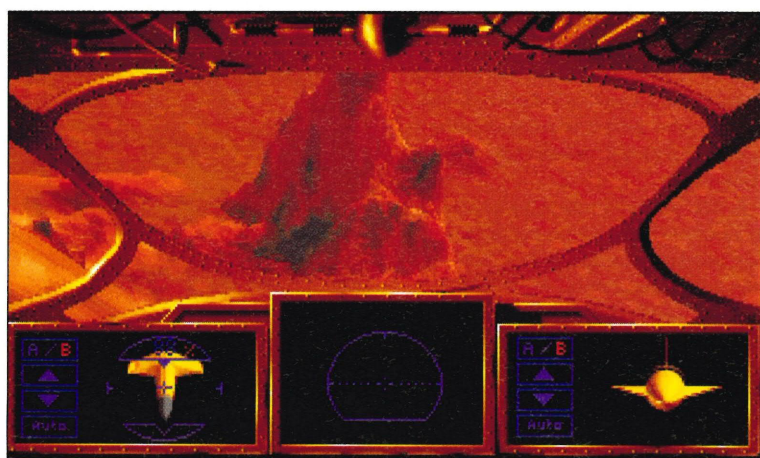
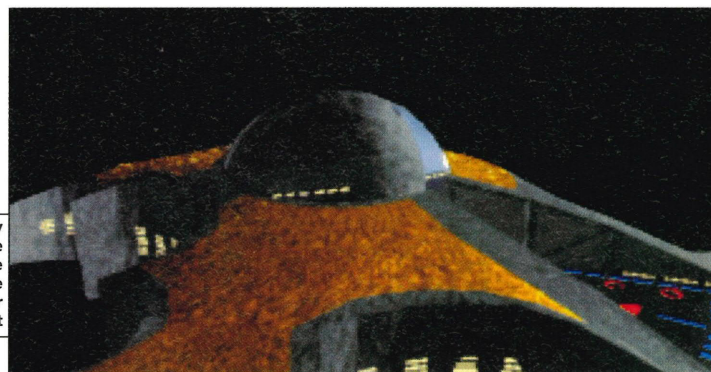
PUBLISHER	Sierra
CONTACT	0734 303171
TEAM	Coktel Vision
PRICE	£54.99
RELEASE DATE	Out Now

*'How can man die better Than facing fearful odds, For the ashes of his fathers And the temple of his Gods?'*

LORD MACAULAY 1800-1859 ENGLISH HISTORIAN

## Coktel Vision make a return to the world where Eldorado rules with a game entitled Wiracocha

Although graphically impressive, the battle sequences are short and rely little on player involvement



Your journey takes you to fantastic planets, fully animated as you fly through the terrain, avoiding mountains and huge rock formations

**C**oktel Vision are becoming renowned for their floppy to CD title conversions – take Alone in the Dark as an example. What seems to have been a simple shovelware program has in fact had a beautifully written CD music score added. It is this bonus that lifts the game above its floppy counterparts and adds an almost intense atmosphere to the game. With the release of Inca II on to the silver disc we should therefore be seeing a definite improvement over the floppy version.

On installing the program you are faced with the various ways in which it may be placed on your hard drive. At

worst you would have to free up an astronomical 181Mb of space. Even the minimal installation requires that you have at least 17Mb free. This is an excessively annoying feature for a product that comes on CD, the supposed medium to replace the need for a hard drive.

The story is somewhat prolonged but transforms you into Atahualpa, the young and ambitious son of Eldorado, heir to the Inca empire. As this hero you must set off on a crusade against an incoming asteroid, fighting for your heritage. This is done by combining puzzle elements spliced with some arcade shoot 'em up sequences.





and pulls the game down considerably. Another disappointment about the whole game is the sheer lack of thought for the movement of the player. For example if we move into an area where an animation occurs, move away one space then move back again, the animation will re-occur.

Despite these grumbles if you have a fast PC and enjoy graphically rich adventures with a beautifully orchestrated musical score this will rate rather highly. But on the other hand if you don't, then it should be considered very carefully.

Watch out, the board game Mastermind has returned. To diffuse a bomb you must correctly colour code the lights



On the way to retrieving the Timelog you encounter a number of things Jurassic, including this T-Rex which is lurking in the background

## appraisal

**i**nitial impressions were high. The way the game tackles the subject is harshly real. Although it does play well, you would need an extremely powerful PC to fully enjoy it. The game states a minimum specification of a 386-DX with 4Mb of ram and a single session CD-Rom drive. However, trying to play at this

speed is like trying to coax a 286 to run Privateer. Even on the test machine (486-25 with double speed CD-Rom drive) I found the game slow, almost unplayable. It is a well presented adventure but just may not appeal to many because of the high power it seeks and the flaws that exist in the save game feature.

PAUL ASKEW

PCA SCORE **68%**

## data bank

**MINIMUM MEMORY**  
4MB  
**MINIMUM PROCESSOR**  
486  
**OPTIMUM SPEED**  
33MHz  
**INSTALLATION**  
Essential  
**HARD DISK SPACE**  
3MB  
**GRAPHICS**  
SVGA  
**SOUND CARDS**  
Multi-media Compliant  
**CONTROLS**  
Mouse

## 'There's little player interaction'

Some of the puzzles encountered on the journey are not particularly taxing. Each one could only take a matter of minutes to complete which can become particularly frustrating when you have just paid a rather large amount of cash for the game.

**Moving away from** these elements to the battle sections you will notice the inept almost Wing Commander style in which you pursue the enemy through space. It is such a poor imitation, if you can call it that, that you may feel slightly insulted to play them.

They are not exceptionally difficult

either, with each battle lasting almost as long as one of the puzzles.

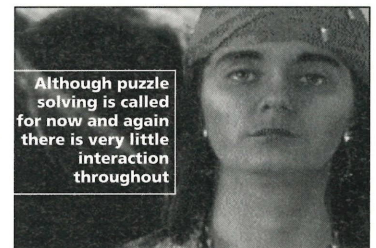
A bonus to these battles are small animated sections lasting a few fleeting moments, depicting a certain move or battle sequence that supposedly happened between yours and an enemy's vessel. They can be highly entertaining and also break the flow of the already declining game.

Between several of the areas you will be able to further animations that allow the story to unfold. They can be funny to watch because the lip sync and the vocalization produced are by no means linked. This therefore leads to the character looking like a goldfish swimming around, while the sound card

pumps out his or her voice. They can also be overly long.

These parts of the story are what consume the vast quantities of CD space and hide the fact that this game is little more than a glorified puzzle game blending together some horrendous battle sequences.

As a sequel the game works well. The original was rubbed into the ground for having about as much gameplay as Dragons Lair. This new encounter, although not perfect, has slightly more interaction even though being slightly uninteresting. As CD products go it is a high quality product although it doesn't quite match up to some of the new CD-Rom releases that are around.



Although puzzle solving is called for now and again there is very little interaction throughout

## data bank

**MINIMUM MEMORY**  
580k  
**MINIMUM PROCESSOR**  
386  
**OPTIMUM SPEED**  
33MHz  
**INSTALLATION**  
Essential  
**HARD DISK**  
16.5MB  
**GRAPHICS**  
VGA  
**SOUND CARDS**  
Adlib, SoundBlaster  
**CONTROLS**  
Mouse

## appraisal

**V**isually this game is stunning. It features some excellently assembled video sequences and an extensive range of graphics. The sound is decidedly good too with a CD sound track playing in the background. However, I found it all a little too easy to complete. The puzzles presented are non-too complex, even for a non-too intelligent

mind. So, although Inca II looks great it has a very primitive game structure and its gameplay only serves to prove this. It is a little better than its floppy based counterpart and is a considerable improvement over its predecessor, but it is still not an all time great. So much could have been made of it but this is another example of poor implementation of CD technology.

PAUL ASKEW

PCA SCORE **74%**

The non-interactive sequences take you from deep space to the planet surface you are visiting



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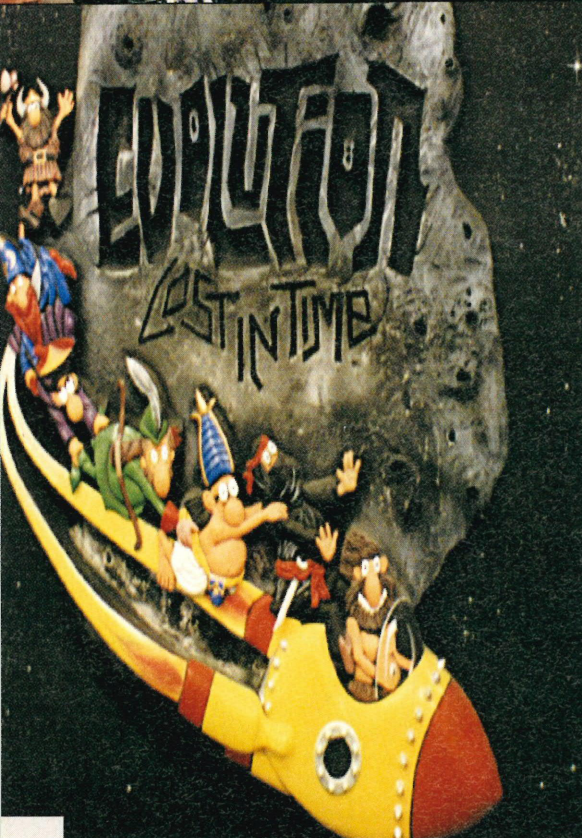
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**Left:** Piglet (far left) is so called because most of the Imagitec staff have the same names. Therefore, nicknames were devised to avoid confusion  
**Below:** This promotional model for Evolution - Lost In Time shows the seven characters from the different time zones being taken into space



The name **Imagitec** may or may not ring a bell but Humans certainly will. With the sequel, **Evolution Lost in Time**, near to completion, Imagitec look set to surge full speed ahead into the '94 spotlight

## 'WE ORIGINALLY

**Y**ou may not necessarily recognise the name, but Imagitec Software have been producing high quality software over all formats for several years. Their most memorable product was the **Humans**, a direct Lemmings competitor, which although not as successful as the Psygnosis smash hit, was well received and set the company up for the sequel entitled **Evolution - Lost in Time**.

Based in Dewsbury, West Yorkshire, Imagitec have just signed a deal with US Gold allowing the Birmingham-based software giants to exclusively market and distribute Imagitec's titles.

When we arrived at the plush offices, windswept and rain-beaten, we were greeted by Piglet. He may sound like someone straight out of a Winnie the Pooh book but many of the folk who work for Imagitec have the same name and so nicknames are created to avoid any kind of confusion.

**Talking to Piglet,** Bridgett Hirst and Tony Bourne we decided it was time to introduce Imagitec to the games buying public.

Imagitec have been working in the software industry for some time now but began, like so many software houses, as a development team writing other people's games. Piglet has been in the company since those early days and remembers the initial struggles.

'The company has been going for around six and a half years. Started up by Martin Hooley, president, with what was originally just a bunch of people he knew in the industry. We originally did a lot of conversion work based in an old converted mill in

# IMAGINATION



# FOR THE



# DID A LOT OF CONVERSION WORK BASED IN AN ▶

Ravensthorpe which we shared with quite a few rats and a lot of cigarettes. We did the conversions of Amiga Ultima World for Ocean and worked with Gremlin. Bits and pieces really and nothing of any great notoriety.

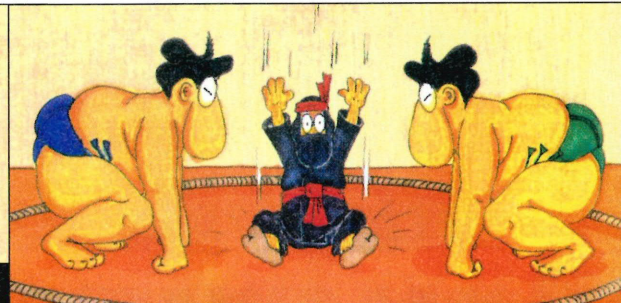
'About three years ago when we were really tired of doing other people's work for them and had enough money to stand on our own two feet, we began developing our own games. The first major one was Humans which made us far too much money to talk about – an obscene amount but there you go!

'Since then we've been doing a lot more original work and very few conversions. Last November we signed the co-publishing deal with US Gold for our floppy products in Europe and that alone has earned us a great deal more coverage.'

Humans was a Lemmings-style game featuring cavemen desperately trying to overcome the obstacles of life. It was originally released with Mirage and was a great success story for the company. Piglet and the



All: US Gold paid for a design plan to be firstly drawn up so that Imagitec could get to work on Evolution without any problems



team were very proud of the finished product.

'It was an idea that had been knocking around for a while. And when it was proven that there was a market for that type of 'Lemmings' game, we decided to put the money and staff behind the project and get it out on the shelves. It certainly appealed to the same type of person so it was perceived as a direct competitor to Lemmings. But it still did really well.'

**Imagitec is a huge place** crammed full with graphic artists, programmers and musicians. There is also an extensive puppet studio where masks and models are being created for future products. Gathering so much talent in one place was no easy feat as piglet now explains.

'You name 'em we've got 'em. People that we've taken from other companies in the industry, we've got one of the new SNES programmers - an ex-Rare guy, some people come straight from art college, some from computer college and some people come from Tetleys and McDonalds. We're not really concerned with massive qualifications or people who have been in the software industry for years. We're more concerned with people who feel they're up to the job of

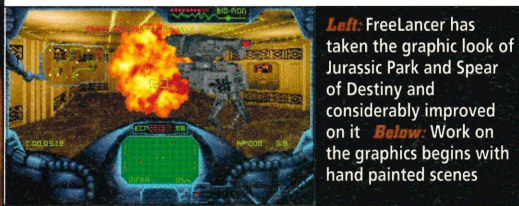
developing for Imagitec and have imagination. We've employed from agencies that have, in the end, turned out to be completely incompetent. Imagitec is a company where everyone can participate with ideas and suggestions and we expect them to.'

Imagitec are proud of the staff they employ and the way they run the company, allowing everyone to become involved in a project, offering ideas and advice when needed. In the past, this style of management has only been seen in the United States – Imagitec are one of the first European software houses to have adopted this style.

This openness to ideas is clearly visible in the development of a project. Piglet describes the process by which a game, such as Evolution, is created.

'A lot of the time we get a brief, sometimes it's a commercial brief – for instance a licensed product, or maybe somebody wants us to do a good conversion.

'Someone will come up with an idea and say that they would like this type of game. The idea goes off to the design department, which consists of three ▶



Left: FreeLancer has taken the graphic look of Jurassic Park and Spear of Destiny and considerably improved on it. Below: Work on the graphics begins with hand painted scenes



# FUTURE





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# OLD CONVERTED MILL IN RAVENSTHORPE'



**Above:** Each character is zapped away from their timezone which is explained by animation

## IMAGINATION FOR THE FUTURE

► designers and two graphic designers and they will come up with an initial design, roughly sketching out a storyline and deciding on a name for the game. A couple of storyboards will then be produced which are like hand painted screenshots, rather than cinema-style storyboards and we'll see if that design can be taken further and if the game is worth producing. We'll talk to programmers about how feasible certain elements of gameplay will be.

'Once that's done, everyone will be given a full design which will act as a guideline when creating the product. This will spec out in detail the control systems and types of sprites - we may even design more sprites and backgrounds to see how the eventual product will look, just to make sure that once we've coded stuff we don't have to backtrack because of a simple mistake.

'It's initially expensive doing it on paper but it turns out cheaper in the long run because we can tell what we want early on and we can make any changes without too much fuss.

'We then assemble the team for the project - musicians programmers, graphic artists and 3D artists. The designer has to then make sure that everyone is doing what they were initially asked to do throughout the development period.

'It can take up to three years to develop a really huge project that you've got a lot of slippage on, or it could take as little as six months for a quick conversion. And the size of the team can range from just two people to 10 on a larger project.' US Gold get involved in Imagitec projects early on so that they can start to gather points of sale and create

artwork for the packaging, design and manuals.

Piglet feels that if a game is to be successfully marketed then it is very important for the publishing company to get involved early on in the whole of the game's development.

'US Gold like to be involved from the very start and therefore have a really good idea of what the game is all about. They are keen to make sure that the product hits the deadline, obviously, but they also pump their own ideas into the product. This outside involvement can prove important at times because we can get a little too close to the game we're producing.'

### Unlike many other software

companies, US Gold actually pay for a special design document to be drawn up detailing every aspect of a game. Although this proves beneficial to development it is essential for US Gold to know whether or not an idea is feasible.

Tony Bourne is the first to praise this system and goes on to explain why a design document is so crucial in today's competitive marketplace.

'What we are starting to do now is commission a design document and pay for it. It may take two or three months for the development company to actually design it and after that period it's presented to us. Sales, marketing and PR will look at it and, in theory can turn a project down at that stage if they don't like it.

'But at least for those first few months there's been enough resources put into the project for an in-depth, high-quality game plan to be produced. It's an attempt at emulating the kind of development techniques employed in the States.'

Piglet agrees that this system is very relaxed and

gives the development house time to plan the product in depth.

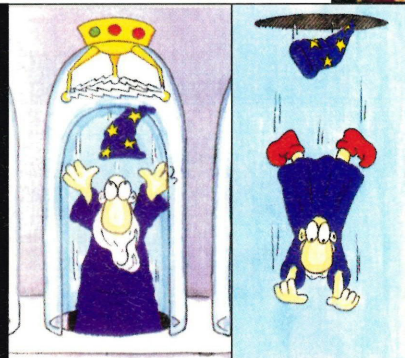
'It's a very comfortable way of doing things. You know what you're going to do before you begin development. That way you don't get half the team going off in one direction, the other half going in the other direction and the product ending up looking nothing like the original design plan.'

Tony Bourne believes that the document should be as in-depth as it possibly can and not leave anything to the imagination.

**The producer from US** Gold and, in Imagitec's case the designer or their producer, have an idea of exactly what the game is going to look like. In theory, you should be able to play the game just from the design plan. Doing it that way you also avoid wasting money by actually getting half way through the coding of the game before you realise it isn't actually a good idea.

'There are always fresh ideas coming in and we do see a great deal of project ideas. However, not all of them come up to scratch and approximately one in five plans are passed.'

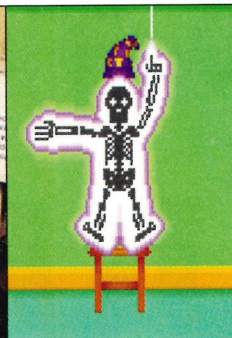
**Right:** The design document was commissioned so that both Imagitec and US Gold would have a good idea of how Evolution would look when finally completed. Apparently, only one in five project design documents are given the go ahead by US Gold. Evolution - Lost in Time is one of those games







**Above:** Imagitec employ approximately 40 people at present, made up of graphic artists, programmers and musicians as well as model makers. **Left & Right:** The girls in the model shop design masks and costumes that are worn by the Imagitec staff when digitising live action scenes. Future Imagitec products are promised to incorporate these live action techniques



One of the most difficult factors to anticipate when a game goes into development is whether or not that product will be popular by the time it is released to the public. Especially for a product such as Evolution which can take a great deal of time to develop. As PR Manager for US Gold, Bridgett Hirst understands how quickly trends change as technology improves.

**'One of the things you** have to take into account is that when you first think of a game concept it could be three years before that game actually comes out. Technology changes a great deal in that time and the product may be out of date even before it has come out.'

Imagitec and US Gold were adamant that Evolution would be technologically superior to Humans and that meant searching through Humans return slips and noting exactly what it was that people didn't like.

Piglet and the Imagitec team are proud of their latest effort and consider it a massive improvement on

its predecessor. 'When we started Evolution we went through all the comments that we received from the consumers who purchased Humans. Most developers who do a sequel simply add new graphics and levels without improving gameplay or finding out what people disliked about the first product.

'We gathered data from various sources so that we could pinpoint what it was that people didn't like. By listening to people's complaints and improving techniques you can save yourself a lot of money. It does sound rather mercenary but without money we wouldn't be able to produce any games.'

Imagitec are very excited by the prospect of developing on CD. However, unlike many other companies they see this medium as a way of improving original games and not just as any old excuse to just add extra graphics and sound at the expense of gameplay.

**Piglet is more** excited than anyone over the prospect of developing CD games and sees it as the way forward in computer entertainment. 'We're mucking around with live action technology and filming people dressed in costumes - animatronics.

'The masks we have just developed were for a CD-based product. They are taken from head casts. Someone has to sit in makeup for an hour or so while we take a cast of their head. Once these casts are finished we take a positive mould from that, mould the mask over the outside then have the mask cast so that it fits perfectly over the face.

'When we're filming the actors, the face masks move as they actually talk. It takes up a hell of a lot of time which is a disadvantage when working with CD but this is something we couldn't do on a floppy-based game.

'A lot of companies who are developing CD games are simply converting the floppy version without any enhancement, which is a real waste considering the stuff you can do with CD. The problem we seem to encounter is access time. It is very difficult doing

certain games on CD because of access time, which is invariably slower than a hard disk.

As far as graphic and sound storage goes this is not really a problem, but problems do arise when you're trying to improve the speed or playability of the game. Day of the Tentacle, for example, is a really gorgeous game with great graphics and superb sound but it is a little shorter than I would have liked. I wanted to go on for weeks and weeks and that's the kind of improvements you could make using CD. But then you've got to balance that against the money you can spend. If you put a lot more man hours into a project then the product is going to be more expensive at the end.'

**One area of games** which many software developers neglect is the music. Piglet is keen to stress that Imagitec take music very seriously and see it as an integral part of any computer game.

'Many people think that computer games are all about graphics but sound is vitally important, music as well as sound effects. Music is an integral part of any games atmosphere and we want to enhance that as best we can.

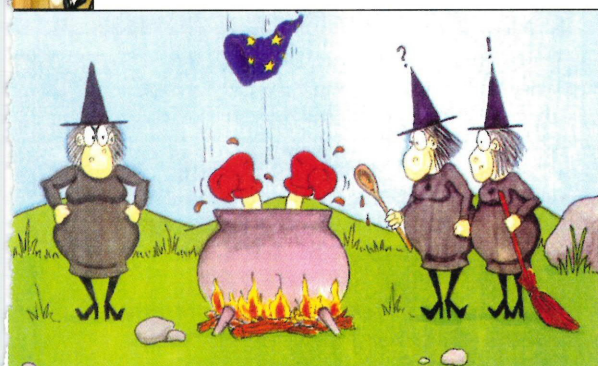
'We once employed a busker for a month, who was and still is a superb guitar player, so that he would lay down some really gritty guitar riffs to some music we were developing for a game. The results were very pleasing indeed.'

At the moment, most of Imagitec's energy is being directed into Evolution - Lost in Time. There are several areas where Evolution improves on Humans and Imagitec want to make sure that Humans fans are guaranteed an even more challenging game second time round.

'Evolution is larger and more accessible than Humans. It features seven characters all from different time zones who each have a different skill. The puzzles are fairly simple at first but do get harder.'

As well as Evolution - Lost in Time, Imagitec are busy producing a selection of other exciting products. But one thing's for sure, Imagitec will soon be commanding the same respect reserved for companies such as Bullfrog, DMA Design and D.I.D.

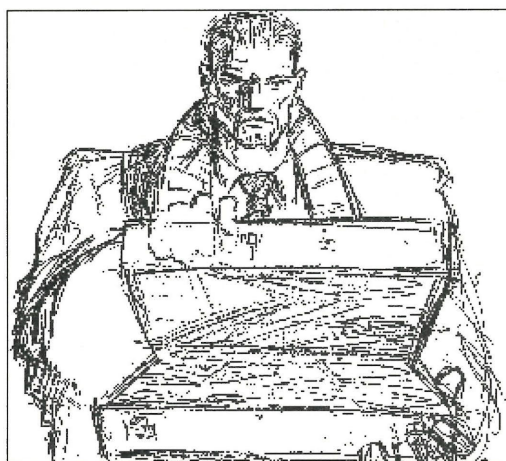
STEVE WHITE





# MORE THAN JUST A SEQ

An Enemy Unknown holds the reins of many a game. This time the traditional **UFO** is brought into the middle of the fighting fray



Strategy games available to the PC user base are usually expected to be jammed into a corner, expected to please a limited audience at best and then fade into significance. This is not because they're bad products, but simply because there isn't enough demand for this sort of interactive entertainment.

But just imagine a game, a strategy/tactical affair no less, that can win over even the most sceptical of freewheelers. Laser Squad, since its release over three years ago has.

But despite accruing something akin to a cult following it has fallen short of that magical ingredient to lift it beyond the boundaries of its 'genre'.

*Even so, the regular flurry* of phone calls and letters asking for a sequel or even add-ons has not really stopped simmering. The wait is drawing to a close now though. The sequel entitled UFO Enemy Unknown is scheduled for a February/March release from those able-bodied people at MicroProse.

Tim Roberts, producer of the game, is keen to make UFO as accessible as possible. Early signs are promising. The game was recently issued to most of the staff at MicroProse with no instructions at all and nearly everyone has been able to get into it straightaway. 'While the game is very deep and will require a



## 'THE IDEAL GAME WOULD BE SO

**Left:** The Aliens are invading the planet and causing massive destruction. Can Earth fend off the invaders or will they reign supreme? **Right:** UFO features a great deal of strategy. You can monitor the battles between Earthman and alien and even control your resources from the map computer displays



substantial manual to explain its finer points, the fundamentals are very straightforward and it should be easy for people to get into and have fun straightaway,' says Tim.

The synopsis of the story, remaining true to its monicker, tells of an alien encounter. An unidentified extra terrestrial unit is homing in on earth with the best of intentions to take over. To counteract such a grave movement in the history of time, a select committee of governments has grouped together in an attempt to retaliate against them.

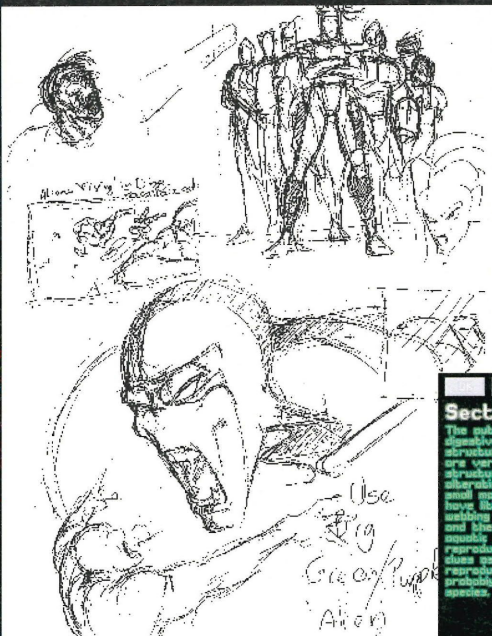
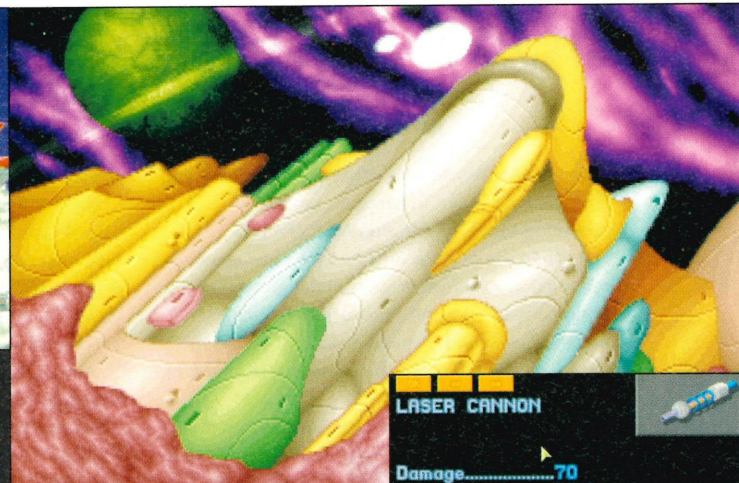
As such they agree to fund an agency called X-Com



# UEL



**Above:** You must decide what forces to use against the alien invasion. You can call up the latest information on all available weapons  
**Below Left:** MicroProse have spent a great deal of time rendering the UFO interiors  
**Bottom Right:** From the world map you can direct your forces  
**Below:** Some of the original sketches for UFO



## Sectoid AUTOPSY

The autopsy reveals vestigial digestive organs and a single stomach. The brain and eyes are very well developed. The structure suggests genetic alteration or selection. The small mouth and nose appear to have little function. The widening between the fingers and the flat feet suggest aquatic origins. There are no reproductive organs and no clues as to how this species can reproduce. They are most probably a genetically engineered species.



**Top:** Once you have eradicated the alien presence on Earth you must then push them back to their homeworld and destroy them for good  
**Left:** When a UFO crashes you can investigate the wreckage and autopsy any remaining aliens

## METHING WHICH USES ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

to work against the aliens. This is where you enter into the equation. Your task as player is one of commander as you take control over X-Com in its struggle against the invaders.

**Not only are troops** at your disposal to try and clear up what looks likely to be one hell of an almighty mess, but scientists and engineers are on hand to discover just how alien technologies work. As knowledge of this new mechanism increases, your troops will inevitably reap the benefits just by being able to use better equipment.

With strategy games we are accustomed to witnessing overhead 3D views as opposed to fast 3D worlds. This makes it easier to see the whole game plan and judge strategical defences more aptly. Representational displays also prove to be effective.

Accordingly, the tactical part of the game, that which is nearest to Laser Squad, is now run in a 3D isometric view, while the world view (geoscope), where much of the strategy takes place, is a 3D model of the earth. The rest of the game consists of a number of information screens and menus which are simple to get to grips with.

The main aspect of the package is really learning how to juggle all the various balls of attack, tactics, discovery and strategy into one consistent rhythm. And the ultimate aim is to discover where exactly the aliens are originating from, while also gearing up to launch a counter attack against them to graduate to a better world. This storyline is not really directly related to that embedded in its forefather Laser Squad which is set further into the future.

So can this really be classed as a sequel in the true sense of the word? Well originally Mythos Games brought us what is now the tactical part of the





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## MORE THAN JUST A SEQUEL

► game,' replies Tim Roberts. 'They had been working on the game for about five months before approaching MicroProse during April of 1992.'

'Since then the strategy aspects have been developed in conjunction with further work and improvements on the original tactical game. Then it was very much the sequel to Laser Squad. We asked them to expand the game idea further and add the strategy section around the tactical game.'

'During development, the strategy aspect has more

or less taken over, so what was originally a sequel has now turned into a totally different game.'

So much so in fact that a good

three months were spent writing the game generation system which produces a different game pattern every time you play, while during the last six months the focus has been on getting the strategic and tactical sections of the game working perfectly in conjunction with each other.

**To retain a degree of** consistency with the prequel, the programming of this latest game has been handled by Julian and Nick Gollop, the very same team that produced Laser Squad in fact.

Julian has been a stalwart of the computer game industry for ten years now, while Nick began his games writing career about five years ago. Their softology includes Rebelstar Raiders, Rebelstar, Rebelstar II, Nebular, Chaos, Laser Squad and Lords of Chaos.

Julian Gollop may be just one of many in thinking

instead of other equally interesting situations.'

There is a huge following for strategy games from MicroProse such as Railroad Tycoon and Civilisation, so

why not seriously exploit this type of medium and give the RPG hack 'n' slay episodes a run for their money and less of a change of survival?

'Although we are hoping to attract the same sort of audience for UFO Enemy Unknown,' says Tim Roberts. 'This isn't to say that people

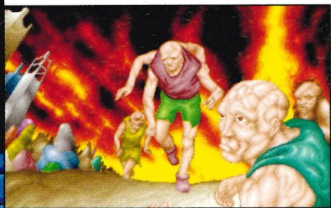
who don't like strategy games should switch off the idea. The tactical section of the game and even the process of hounding the UFOs and shooting them down should please most of the action orientated players who are out there as well.

**The original interception** sequence was designed as an arcade/action sequence. However we felt this didn't really tie in with the other elements of the game and we have now opted for a more tactical sequence. It looks better as well.'

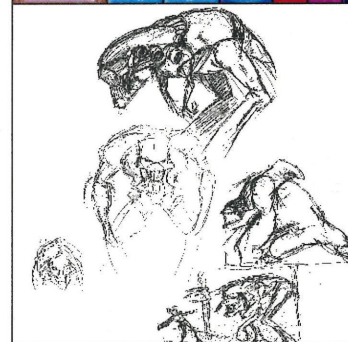
And this is on top of tempting megalomaniac tendencies. Players are not just expected to be mere tourists passing through this futuristic world, but a governing body controlling the throughflow of action and making decisions that could effect whole groups of people, for better or worse.

'I like strategy games and historical war games. My ideal game would be something which uses Artificial Intelligence to provoke decent responses from other characters and presents a genuine role-playing experience rather than a series of puzzles,' reflects Julian. 'Maybe that will come in time, just like the

that there are certainly too many role-playing games based around Dungeons and Dragons scenarios



PSIONIC TRAINING				
Remaining Psi-lob capacity	0			
Names	Psionic Strength	Psionic Skill Improvement	In Training?	
Tase Sabo	13	13	YES	
Sam Rodriguez	17	17	YES	
Danielle Boulesau	10	10	YES	
Yuri Romanov	11	11	YES	
Geoff Berger	11	11	YES	
Scott Stewart	11	11	YES	
Ed Brown	11	11	YES	
Neil Martin	11	11	YES	
Hishiko Morita	11	11	YES	
Arthur Blake	11	11	YES	
Frances Miller	Unknown	0/+0	NO	
Gina Rodriguez	Unknown	0/+0	NO	
Valerie Henderson	Unknown	0/+0	NO	
Deerfield	Unknown	0/+0	NO	



**Top:** The sprites are created in grids which are then cut and pasted into the main code. **Above:** The movement of humans and aliens is controlled via a neat interface. In the finished game there will be several different types of alien and human forms

## ► TO PROVOKE DECENT RESPONSES FROM OTHERS'



**Top:** Newsflash! A group of aliens are invading Earth. **Above:** Human troops on the search for unwelcome alien invaders

multi-player option that just hasn't been able to be incorporated into the game this time around and also the use of Real Time moves. But what we have is a game that will talk in sophisticated and enduring terms. The consoles will undoubtedly stay around for quicker no thinking games.'

**Therein lies the basic appeal** of the game. It doesn't pretend to be anything but a tactical thinking man's game. By not renouncing their intuitions and presenting a game that adheres to the mould of lots of crash bang wallop action and very little substance, as is so often the norm in console

games, the team behind UFO Enemy Unknown have certainly been making a concerted effort to keep this game tightly structured and consistent in its make-up.

'We were disappointed with initial sales for Laser Squad and feel that it hadn't received the marketing it deserved,' says Julian.

He is hopefully looking to the time when UFO's user friendliness may even convert non-followers to the fold, elevating it to the main stream band rather than to that which its forefather Laser Squad belongs – a cult. Let's hope that this is what will be created and that Julian won't be disappointed with the end result.

SHARON GREAVES





## CD-ROM EXPLAINED

### WHAT IS CD-ROM?

CD-ROM is a storage technology for large amounts of information, which can be accessed from a PC via a CD-ROM drive. CD-ROM technology uses Compact Discs (CDs) as its information storage medium. These disks can store high resolution colour images, millions of words, full audio sound tracks and much, much more.

### THE CD-ROM ADVANTAGE

There are numerous advantages in having a CD-ROM drive. CDs can hold the equivalent of up to 600 floppy disks and software developers can design more sophisticated and complex programs to take advantage of this large storage capacity. Cheap production costs, compact design and the practically indestructible nature of CDs also makes them ideal for software storage.

### KODAK PhotoCD COMPATIBLE

Kodak have recently introduced a new technology called Kodak PhotoCD. This allows normal photographs from a camera to be stored on CD discs, which can then be viewed on your PC. Photographs can be enhanced or manipulated using KODAK ACCESS or GRAPHICS WORKS software, to give you the results you need for your business presentations or the "family album".

### MULTI-SESSION COMPATIBLE

Some applications require that the information written to a CD-ROM is updated on more than one occasion. This involves several or 'multi' sessions of writing to the disc. All four CD-ROM drives featured are multi-session compatible, which means that they can read all of the information which has been written to a CD in this way. Inferior, single-session drives can only read what was originally written on the first session, not the information added on subsequent sessions. Applications such as Kodak's PhotoCD, which can update CDs with additional photographs, require a multi-session drive to read all the information which may be stored on the disc.

### MULTIMEDIA (MPC) COMPATIBLE

The Mitsumi, Panasonic and Sony CD-ROM drives are ready for all types of multimedia applications. They are fully compliant with the Multimedia PC (MPC) standard, full compatibility with existing and future multimedia programs.

### REELMAGIC COMPATIBLE

All four CD-ROM drives featured here are fully compatible with ReelMagic, making them ideal drives from which to run the next generation of future software that ReelMagic makes possible.

### DOUBLE SPEED TRANSFER

Double Speed Transfer indicates that a drive is able to stream data from the CD-ROM drive to the computer up to twice as fast as a single speed CD-ROM drive. The most obvious benefit of dual speed can be seen when viewing AVI or Quicktime movies from CD-ROM. MPC Applications that need high speed transfer of graphics and audio data, such as the latest photo-realistic games, will also benefit from the increased data transfer rate of double speed drives.

### DO I NEED AN INTERFACE CARD?

The four CD-ROM drives shown on this page do not require an additional interface card when used with a PC sound card, eg the Sound Galaxy range, which includes an appropriate Mitsumi/Panasonic/Sony interface. The Mitsumi CD-ROM drive includes a 16-bit AT interface card as standard. The Sony CDU-31A-02 drive comes with a Mediavision 16-bit stereo sound card and therefore, does not require an additional interface. The Panasonic and Sony CDU-31A-03 drives do not include interface cards and would therefore need to be used with an appropriate sound card, eg the Sound Galaxy range (Sony drive has a Sony/Mitsumi adaptor), or an interface card, both of which are available from Silica. AT interface card for Panasonic or Sony CD-ROM Drives - CDR 4072 £19.95+VAT.

### EASY TO INSTALL AND USE

All the drives are easy to install. Just slide them into a spare 5.25" drive bay in your PC\*. They do not require disc caddies and disc loading is via a manual slide mechanism on the Mitsumi drive and a motorised tray loading mechanism on the Panasonic and Sony drives.

\*NOTE: Some drives may require slide rails - check your PC drive bay.

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# MITSUMI Panasonic SONY

## CD-ROM DRIVES



Model shown - Panasonic CR562B CD-ROM Drive



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### INTERFACE OPTIONS

The Mitsumi CD-ROM drive includes an AT interface. The Sony CDU-31A-02 drive includes a 16-bit sound card and therefore does not require an additional interface. Both the Panasonic and Sony (includes Sony/Mitsumi adaptor) CDU-31A-03 drives require an interface. They can be used with sound cards which have Panasonic/Mitsumi/Sony interfaces eg the Sound Galaxy range, or an AT interface card, both of which are available from Silica. AT interface card for Panasonic and Sony CD-ROM Drives - CDR 4072 £19.95+VAT

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KODAK PHOTOCD COMPATIBLE	✓	✓	✓	✓
REELMAGIC COMPATIBLE	✓	✓	✓	✓
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\*NOTE: Some drives may require slide rails - check your PC drive bay.

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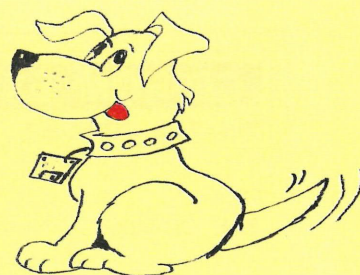
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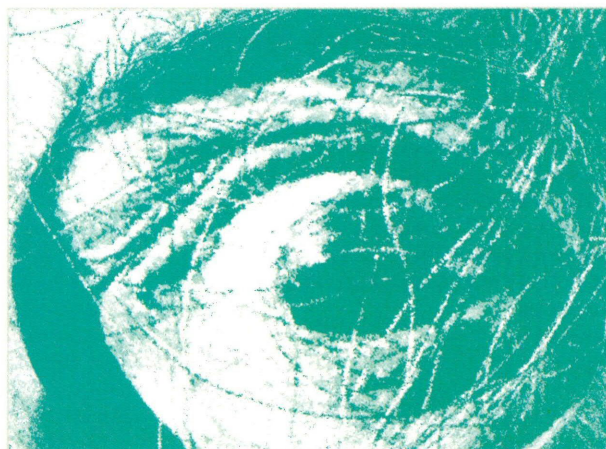
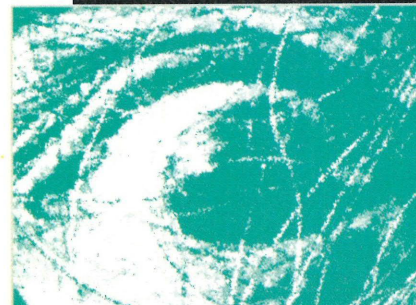
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# the surgery



## A H THE SURGERY, MOST DEFINITELY MORE THAN JUST YOUR EVERYDAY RUN OF THE MILL TIPS SECTION

At present I must admit to feeling very thankful. What for you might well ask? I can tell you that it is certainly not for counting my blessings. For as far as I can see I have very few and counting them would take little or no time at all, thus making this a pointless exercise to begin with. These days everything seems to be a bind, not like in my younger days when I didn't have a care in the world and every event, no matter how depressing, had a good side to it. Who am I trying to kid? I don't remember a time like that.

Sorry, went off on a bit of a tangent there for a minute, always doing that, really must try and break the habit. Now, what was I talking about? Oh yes, I was telling you about why I feel thankful wasn't I, that was it. Well, it's because we've well and truly seen off those wretched festivities for another twelve months. There is nothing like the Christmas period for giving people a reason to be cheerful. All that smiling and singing. It's so

unnatural. I'm just glad it's out of the way again and people can get back to the real business at hand of being fed up and miserable, the way they're supposed to be. Enough!

On with the advice. The *David Leadbetter's Golf* hints I supplied last month have been an absolute roaring success and I have been inundated with requests for more of the same. If the demand remains high then I will be forced to oblige I suppose, but four weeks is far too short a period for me to even consider doing any more. I'm not Greg Norman you know.

This month I thought we would go for a change of track on this particular section. As regular readers will know, most of the pleas for help I receive concern role-playing games or graphic adventures. It seems that action games on the PC are either far too easy or the people who play them simply can't be bothered to ask and consign the games to some dark, dusty corner never to be

seen again. One such game that I know people cannot be finding too easy is *Jurassic Park* from Ocean. In fact when you go into the Waiting Room you will see that I have already received a cry for help. For this reason I decided that some general tips on the gameplay wouldn't go amiss because I know that there must be many struggling in what is a particularly tricky game to get to grips with.

The first things I feel I should mention are the first aid kits and ammunition packs that are lying around the complex. A successful player will quickly learn that they are best left alone until needed. They are in limited supply and if you go around collecting everything available when you are at full strength and armed to the teeth you will find that you are severely struggling when it comes to later on in the game. The best thing to do is ignore all of the objects until you are desperate and then return to collect them later on.

It seems to me that the cattle prod is a far more effective weapon than the rifle despite the instruction manual's advice, but it is entirely up to you who you choose to believe. Not much of a choice really I suppose. Another aspect which I'm sure catches many unsuspecting ►





# THE Pterodactyl

► players out is that you can only drop a maximum of two levels without dying. Therefore you should never go plummeting off a ledge without first being entirely sure about what lies beneath. The phrase 'look before you leap' is certainly appropriate in this game.

Another useful tip is that instead of pushing blocks over the edges of precipices it is far better to shoot them over the edge using the cattle prod, thus eradicating the chances of you careering over the ledge as well. Also, when you are outside it really is wise to keep off the high ledges as much as possible. This will make it far more difficult for those annoying Pterodactyls to get their beaks into you and therefore extends your life expectancy quite significantly.

When you venture inside you will realise that ammunition is very sparse and you really cannot afford to waste a single shot. For this reason it is essential to employ the fastest, most efficient methods of disposing of the genetically engineered beasts.

In the case of the terrifying Raptors the following method is most successful. Wait for the creature to attack you and as soon as you see it, walk backwards whilst firing. Keep this up until you have exterminated your foe. Raptors are very cunning animals and move exceptionally quickly. They can be on you before you even realise that they might be in the vicinity.

In Jurassic Park there is a cast iron certain way of knowing when you are in the presence of one of them. Listen very carefully to the music. When you enter the vicinity of a Raptor, be it in a room or an external area the music will change telling you exactly what is going on. That's not all though. If you are finding it difficult to judge when it is about to strike keep listening to the music as it will change again.

Oh, one last thing. When you enter the sewer section of the first level you should stay in the water as much as possible. This means that the Pterodactyls will find it impossible to have a go at you, and the only things you need watch out for are the vicious alligators, which if they get hold will take a large chunk out of you. Don't worry about them though. Even if you have slower reflexes than a corpse you shouldn't have too much difficulty dispatching them. That's it. I can't delay it any longer. The Waiting Room is now open for business once again.



Jurassic Park has been extensively unravelled this month



## HIS IS SUCH A COSY PLACE NOW IT'S HAD A LICK OF PAINT. WHY THEN DOES IT SEND A CHILL DOWN MY SPINE?

**I'm playing the ancient** Magnetic Scrolls game *Weird Dreams*. It certainly has an apt title because strange it most certainly is. So much so that I cannot get anywhere on it at all. I know you probably think that it is so old I should move with the times and just dump it in the bin, allowing myself to try something new. But once I start something I like to finish it. I hope you understand this.

**Jim Bloodstone,**  
Warrington.

*Ah, you're certainly a man after my own heart. They are my sentiments exactly and I firmly believe that if you consider something to be worth starting you should be prepared to stick with it to the bitter end. And that my friend, is exactly what I did with *Weird Dreams*, although I have to admit that I had to dredge this one up from the back of my mind as it is so old I didn't even know it was available on the PC.*

*If I remember correctly, which I don't always do, at the beginning you must push up and jump onto the brown thing. Make sure you don't hit your head and hit the enter key as frantically as you can. You will then grab onto the brown thing and be lifted up.*

*On the next part you must keep going right and you will come across a hall of mirrors. Keep going right until you are three quarters of the way through the mirror that is on the far right. You must then hit the plus key in a sequence that goes something like: +++ quickly, then +++ slowly and lastly +++ quickly again. It sounds complex, but once you have done it once you will see what I mean. If you do it correctly you will receive a great many extra lives, certainly enough to make things far easier. I recall that the end of level guardians can be particularly tricky to kill and the best thing to do is, bizarrely enough, hit them with a fish.*

**You are always whinging** on about how everyone only sends you questions about adventures and the like, so I have come up with a platformy question that I bet you can't answer. It

is very simply. How do you do the Candle puzzle in *Gods*?

**Sarah Tully,**  
South Wales.

*I really can't believe that anyone would have the gall to request help in such an impudent manner, and as for the suggestion that I may not know the answer, well, quite frankly I'm speechless. I would completely ignore you, but if I did others may start to suggest that I perhaps don't know as much as I would have you believe. I do know the answer and here it is.*

*You must walk to the left, killing all the monsters as you go until a trap key is revealed. Go back to lever 15 and pull it, moving block two will now rise up from the floor. You must jump onto the moving block and go to the ladder. Climb the ladder and kill the wall monster to reveal a spear token. Pick up the trap key and climb back down the ladder. Now walk left to lever 17 and pull that. Then climb down the ladder, walk to the right and jump onto the trapdoor underneath lever 19. Use levers 19 and 20 to close the trapdoors and make your way up, collecting the key on the left as you go. Jump on to moving block three and ride it towards the right.*

*Jump onto the ledge and retrieve the candle. Go to lever 22 and pull it to move block four and climb down through the opening that is revealed. Go to the study and the candle will reveal the previously hidden door key. Go to lever 26 and pull it to gain access to the dragon's lair. Still don't believe I know the answer? Never darken my section again.*

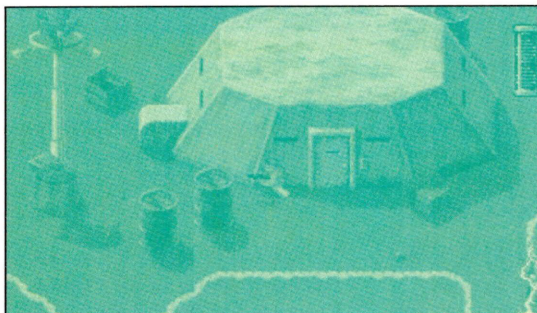
**The adventure game** *Darkseed* is where my problems lie. I have progressed quite some way into the game but have now come to a grinding halt. I am towards the end of day three and have just got the car running using the bottle of Scotch. I am unsure about what I am expected to do next and would therefore greatly appreciate any assistance you can give me.

**Fred Jenkins,**  
Wolverhampton.



# the strategy

There is some confusion as to whether this is a Raptor or a T-Rex. Personally I think it is the latter of the two



Head for this bunker when you have found the two children, Tim and Lex. Safety is found within

The very next thing you should do is return to the house via the rope. Go to the living room and through the mirror to the dark world and exit the dark world house. The small door to the left of the main door is the entrance to a spaceship. Enter the spaceship and use the gloves to operate the lever on the left side of the main console. This starts the ship's engine and you should now exit the ship. The spaceship will now take off and you will be returned to the normal world.

With the ship gone, the mirror is now de-energised and the portal to the dark world is closed. Use the hammer to break the mirror. The librarian will then appear at the door with an item for you and you will be pleased to learn that this is where the game ends.

**I am having extreme** difficulty in *Hare Raising Havoc* from Disney. I have managed to get Roger out into the street which is only three sections from the end of the game and I am becoming more and more frustrated because no matter what I try I cannot seem to complete this part of what is otherwise an excellent game. Please help me!  
Simon Vegan,  
Poole.

There is certainly a wide variety of problems this month. I prefer it that way as it taxes my mind more. Your particular problem perplexed me for a while, but in a flash of inspiration the solution came to me and it goes something like this. Well, exactly like this.

Walk next to the ball and press enter. This will cause Roger to pick it up. Next walk to the right of the fire hydrant and press enter again. This will make Rog turn on the hydrant. The water will come out and bounce the ball into the air landing it on the clown's nose. Now you should walk Roger in front of the pogo stick and press enter, and yes, you guessed it, Roger will get onto the pogo stick and begin to bounce. Press the ever useful enter key to get him to bounce higher and higher. At the very peak of his bounce press enter again to make him grab the telephone line.

Now press the right arrow key to cause him to inch to the right until he reaches the bird who should squawk, peck at Roger and release a feather. You will now drop to the ground. Move Roger next to the feather and press enter causing him to pick it up. Repeat the pogo stick procedure to get onto the wire and press the right arrow key to move him just to the left of the clown's nose and again press enter. Roger will tickle the clown who will sneeze and the ball will bounce off the magnet sign and the magnet will drop onto the telephone wire. Tickle the clown's nose again to receive additional time.

Press the down arrow to drop off the wire and walk Roger in front of the bin. Press enter and he will comically put it on his head. With the bin on Roger's head you must walk under the magnet to cause the magnet to be attracted to the metal dustbin and walk slowly to the right dragging the magnet. Walk into the street and over the manhole cover. Wait for a second until the magnet has pulled the cover up. Be especially watchful for cars approaching from behind and press the up arrow to jump over them.

Walk left to where the garbage can used to be and press enter. Roger will then remove the object from his head. Walk to the right and when Roger is over the open manhole press the down arrow. You have now completed the street scene. That took far longer than I expected. I hope you're satisfied, but we really must press on.

**My son has just** bought the *Jurassic Park* game and is having a little trouble with it. When we noticed your section we thought we would write to you with our request for help and give him a nice surprise. His problem is in the Brachiosaurus Paddock which I believe is quite far on in the game. Can you give him any advice on this particular section?

Mr. & Mrs Davies,  
Brighton.

The objective of this section is simply to collect all dinosaur embryos, find the pass and exit the amusingly titled Pterodome. To do this you must

follow the river to the south-east until you find a bridge. Head north across the bridge and then follow the other side of the river in a north-westerly direction. You should now find the motion sensor which is located nearby and activate and unlock the Pterodome door. This door will only stay open for sixty seconds so you should try really hard to do the following section within that time. Don't worry if you can't though, there is another way to open the door which I shall detail in a moment.

Now fall off the step to the north, then head east and collect all the embryos until the bar is completely full. Collect the pass which can be found beside the crashed car, go south and then head west to find a gate. Go through this gate and enter the Pterodome door.

If the door to the Pterodome is closed after collecting the embryos, explore the surrounding area until you find a set of steps heading west. Go up the steps and take the southern path. You will come across the place where you started on this level. Now proceed again to the motion sensor, reopen the Pterodome door, go down the steps and go through the gate. It's as simple as that.

**In the past I have** written to various other people similar to your good self with a request for help and have received little or no satisfaction in every instance. So the emergence of your section has brought me fresh hope that someone will now actually answer my questions. Please do not disappoint me because you are my last hope.

Lure of the Temptress is the bone of contention in this particular instance. I have found the lard but I don't know what to do with it. I can't get past the Skorl guard, please put me out of my misery.  
Darren Long,  
High Wycombe.





# the surgery

► *The lard on its own is entirely useless. You should also get the tongs as well. Talk to the stranger twice and tell him that you've come for Selena. Talk to Minnow and tell him to tell the Skorl that Selena wants to see him. Stay in the kitchen until Minnow returns. Talk to him again and ask him what the Skorl is interested in. Go to the wine cellar and use the tongs on the bung. Return to Minnow and tell him to tell the Skorl there is a leaky cask in the cellar.*

**Abandoned Places.** Played it? Good. You should be able to help me then when I appeal to you for help. I am in the Tower of Scions and have found a Mahal Key but I cannot find a use for it. Do you know what it is for?  
*Jim Reed, Derby.*

*Of course I know the answer, and, quite frankly I'm offended that you even need to ask. The way in to the Tower is closed off after you enter and you must use the nine and one of the tens to open the door. Then operate one of the skulls twelve and thirteen and the way to the exit will be open. All the chests are available even on this short route so only the undead protectors of the tower will be unearthed by further exploring.*

**I'm stuck on** *Cruise for a Corpse.* Yes, I know it's a French game but you've got to admit it, it is one of the best adventure games ever. I've had this game for a year now and I still can't complete it so I'm sure you understand that I am becoming more than a little worked up by this stage.

The clock says it is 4:10 and I've been wandering around the cabin deck where some of the passengers have been calling me to their rooms and telling me who they think the murderer is. After that I've tried every room and everything I can think of but to no avail. Also, is the black cat on the laundry room shelf significant?  
*Jonathan Grundy, Scotland.*

*OK, I'll answer your question, but whatever you do, don't try and convince me of the merits of this game because I will simply ignore you. At 16:10 you should go to the rear hall and talk to Dick. At 16:20 go to*

*Raoul's cabin and get an envelope. When 16:30 comes around you should go to Hector's room. That should get you a bit further on and hopefully you should be able to make your own progress from this point.*

*Oh, I almost forgot. The only significance to the cat in the laundry room is that it gets people wondering if the cat in the laundry room has any meaning whatsoever.*

**I am stuck on** the ghost ship in the original *Monkey Island*. I have managed to get the feather from the ghost chicken and have got the ghost grog from the sleeping pirate, but I am unable to get any further. I can't get through the creaking door or down the hatch. I am also unable to get the voodoo root from its box. Please assist.  
*Alex Simons, Liverpool.*

*Once you have the grog you should walk back to the room with the animals in it. Walk to the unlocked hatch and use the grog with the dish. The rat will eat the grog and drop dead. With the rat gone to that big piece of cheese in the sky you can now pick up the grease. Worked out what that is for? No. Do I have to do everything for you. Use it on the creaking hatch of course.*

**In The Legend** of *Kyrandia* I have recovered the chalice, learnt how to make potions and I have the silver statuette, but now I have reached the Tropical Lagoon but don't know how to cross it. How do you work the pentagram with the two silver horses and also how do I cross the lake without getting eaten by the shark?  
*Henry Polish, Oxford.*

*Now I don't mind admitting that I found this to be a very tricky, not to mention an extremely frustrating experience, and one which, for me completely ruined what otherwise was an excellent game. It was just far too difficult. Hopefully the sequel will be less annoying.*

*As for your particular query the answer is not actually that difficult to work out. The answer is to make an orange potion and then go on down to the Tropical Lagoon. If you are a pure hearted*



*OK, I know it's not King's Quest V, but you must admit it's damn close*

*The aged Legend of Kyrandia is still causing problems for many adventurers*



*hero, drinking the potion while standing in the pentagram will turn you into a flying horse which can sail over the lake. There, that wasn't too painful now was it?*

**I realise that it's** ridiculously old but I still like it. *Police Quest II* that is. Unfortunately I'm stuck, but then again I wouldn't be in contact with you if I wasn't now would I?

I can diffuse the bomb on the plane but when I arrive in Steelton I find that my girlfriend Marie is dead. I know I am supposed to phone the Steelton police and warn them about Bains, but when I get the number from the operator and dial it, a man comes on the phone and swears at me. What am I doing wrong?

*Roger Hulton, Essex.*

*The only thing I can think of is that you are dialling the wrong number, or even asking the operator to give you the wrong number. What you should do is phone the operator and ask for Colby's number and dial the Steelton police's number. Just to avoid any future confusion I will give you both numbers as well. Aren't I kind. Colby's number is 407 555 3323 and the Steelton police number is 407 555 2677.*

**I would be grateful** if you could help me with a rather large, hairy problem in *King's Quest V*. I have managed to soothe the Ice Queen's wolves with the harp and then I am taken to the crystal cave where I come to a bad end at the hands of a grisly Yeti. Am I missing some vital items or not?

*Tina Sharples, Huddersfield.*

*All you need to do is throw a custard pie in the Yeti's face and he'll fall down. Admittedly he'll fall down a cliff face and get creamed on the rocks below, but animal rights activists will just have to turn a blind eye at this for once. You can buy your custard pie from the baker in the village, assuming of course you have noticed the tiny twinkling spot on the ground next to the broken cart in the town square, which is incidentally a coin of sorts.*

**RIGHT. THAT'S YOUR LOT AGAIN FOR THIS MONTH. I CAN HONESTLY SAY THAT THIS REALLY IS THE HIGH POINT OF MY MONTH. I WILL RETURN THOUGH, AND IF YOU FIND YOURSELF IN NEED OF A HAND YOU KNOW WHERE TO CONTACT ME. THE SURGERY, PC ACTION, EUROPA HOUSE, ADLINGTON PARK, MACCLESFIELD, SK10 4NP.**



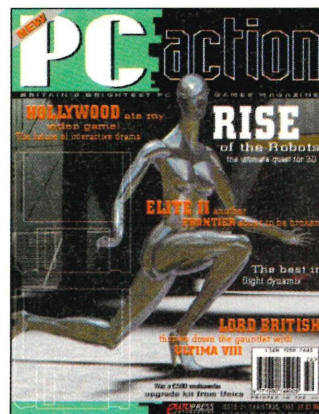
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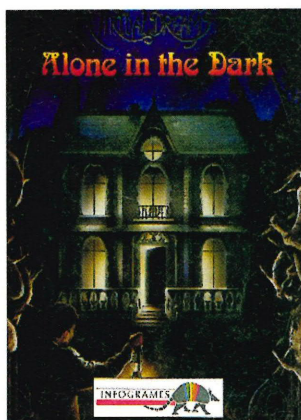
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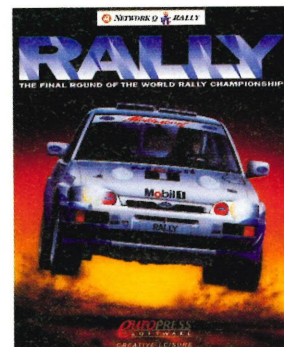
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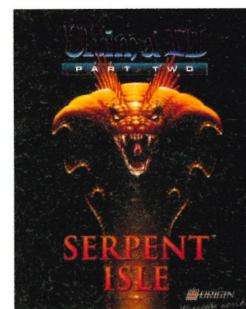
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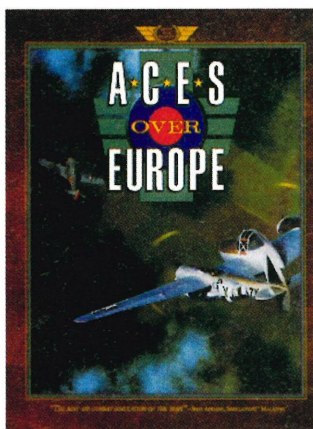


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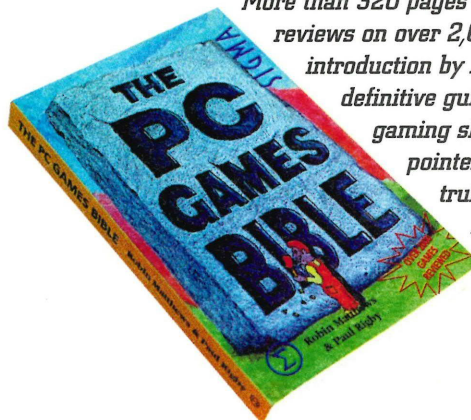
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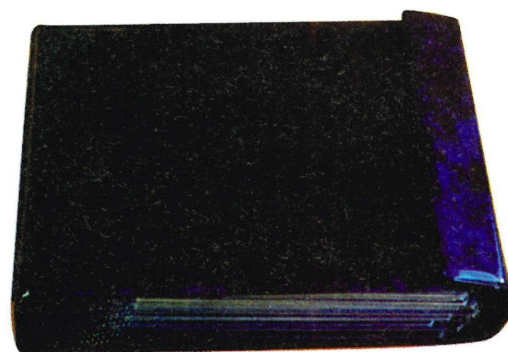
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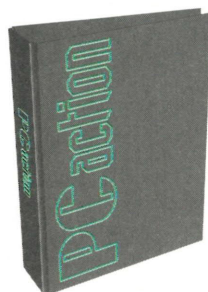


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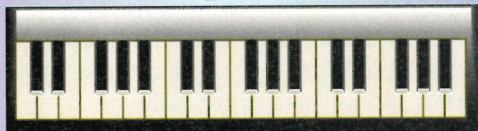




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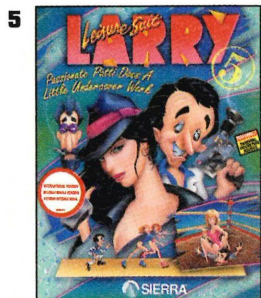
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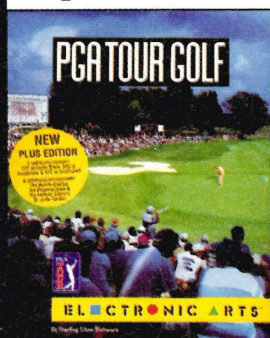
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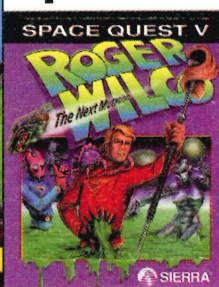
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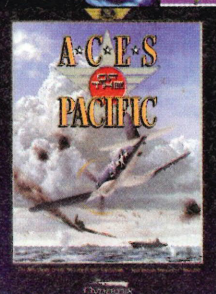
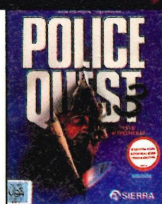
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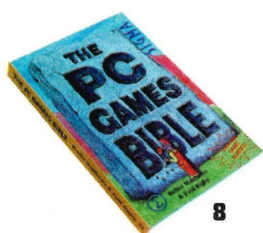
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PC review

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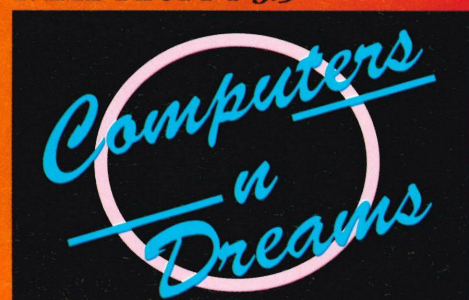
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# network

Is something puzzling you? Do you have a problem that no-one can help you with? Write to us here at PC Action and we'll see if we can find a solution for you. Send your letters to Tony Kaye, Network, PC Action, Europress Interactive, Europa House, Adlington Park, Macclesfield SK10 4NP. We regret that Tony cannot send personal replies, so don't send any stamped addressed envelopes or we'll donate them to charity.

## dense disks

With reference to your reply to the Network 'flying high' article about High Density disks, I feel that your reply was on the whole incorrect and potentially dangerous.

1. High Density (HD) 1.44Mb disks are not the same as Double Density (DD) 720Kb ones. To store the more densely packed information the magnetic coating on an HD disk is very different to that employed on a DD disk. It has a higher 'coercivity' rating (the magnetic field strength required to make a proper recording) than the DD version to prevent the data bleeding together when packed more densely. Therefore to record information on an HD disk, the write current and consequently the magnetic field generated in the R/W head has to be significantly increased. If you format a DD disk with this higher write current, the disk may indicate no errors, but over a short amount of time the signal recorded on the disk becomes ever more corrupt as the recorded signals start to interact. Here we have found that 'Data Not Found' sector errors appear within a week or so. Furthermore, disks formatted in this way are permanently ruined as attempting to reformat them to 720Kb will be unsuccessful (though a tape degaussing tool will sometimes do the trick).

When formatting a DD disk in an HD drive, the /F:720 parameter should always be specified.

Early AT systems would attempt to format a disk to the maximum capacity of the drive ignoring the actual capacity of the inserted disk. This led to the introduction of the second hole on an HD disk and a media sensor being placed by manufacturers on the right front of the drive. If this sensor doesn't detect a hole, it will not switch the R/W current to high, therefore punching a hole in a DD disk is like shooting yourself in the foot as you are removing this safety device.

2. The /q parameter only works on previously

formatted disks and simply resets the File Allocation Table (FAT) and directory entries to simulate an empty disk. It is quick because it doesn't overwrite the existing information in the data area of the disk and check for media errors.

I apologise if this letter seems rather demeaning. I assure you that is not my intention, but formatting a DD disk to 1.44Mb is extremely dangerous as severe loss will result, so I feel I must warn you.

If you want to find out more about this subject, then the book Guide to Data Recovery by Scott Mueller 1991, published by Que Corporation is a good reference work. John Grannan, Senior Computing Officer, Faculty of Arts Computer Support Unit, Manchester University

Is there any way of increasing the speed of my (25Mhz) machine?

Well, John, thanks for your letter and of course, your information is quite correct. My original reply was designed to simplify the question and to warn readers away from using such notch cutting devices, but there will be an element of users who will do

this. I personally know of at least one person using a pair of sidecutters to modify his disks and using them for business data, and he's a manager in Computer Customer Support.

If anyone is still not convinced that this is a bad idea, they certainly can't say that they haven't been warned.

## new user

I am a newcomer to PC gaming and do not know much about my machine. Here are a number of questions which I'd like you to answer:

1. I have an Amstrad Mega PC. Is this any good? (it cost £500)
2. What upgrades should I get for it?
3. Is there any way of increasing the speed of my (25MHz) machine?

4. How would I install a CD-Rom drive? I've read about spare 5.25" drive bays, but my machine hasn't got one. Can I still add a CD-Rom drive?
5. What is a 'Stacker'?

Thanks, and congratulations on a great magazine.

Dean Purvor, Welling, Kent

I'm sorry there isn't enough room for all of your questions, Dean, but here are the answers to the ones we have space for:

1. The Mega PC is a good start, but as with any combination of two different systems, it only ends up as a compromise. It was designed so that Dad could do the word processing and the kids could play on the Mega Drive. It isn't really intended as a serious computer as far as gaming is concerned but it will certainly be all right for the immediate future. Later on it may be worth putting your money into a much faster and more expandable machine.
2. Memory is probably your best investment as it can be used in a lot of other machines if you upgrade to a 486 later on.
3. More memory allows you to use disk caching but without upgrading to a faster processor, there is little you can do about the speed.
4. There are external CD-Rom drives available. See your local dealer, but decide what you are going to do with your machine first. An internal drive is cheaper to buy and will almost certainly fit into a dedicated PC.
5. Stacker is a compression program that lets you store more on your hard disk. MS-DOS 6 has a similar feature called Doublespace. A larger hard disk will be useful as 40 Mb is a little restrictive (see Stacker answer below).

As you can see from all the information above, most of your problems can be sorted out by upgrading the whole computer, but that is likely to be rather expensive (probably in excess of £1200). However, prices seem to be falling quite rapidly and there could well be some good deals appearing as the Pentium chip gets even cheaper. This return has a knock-on effect on the 486 and 386 machines.



# network

**Pornography - the talking point of this month's Network. We will be awarding £50 to the letter of the month. If you feel that you have something to say about the PC world write to: Network, PC Action, Europa House, Adlington Park, Macclesfield SK10 4NP**

## sex crazy!

I have owned a PC 386SX now for several years and on the whole have been very happy with the computer. What worries me, however is the amount of sexploitation that there is in computer games. I read with interest your article on sex and computer games and found it totally deplorable that software houses should be developing these sorts of games.

This kind of sordid software seems to be the trend nowadays and with the advent of CD which, as you stated in your article, is getting to the stage of actual video quality footage, I find it very worrying indeed. Not only have we the commercial software to worry about but also the widespread availability of pornographic material which can simply be downloaded from a BBS.

I know that computer games are blamed for many social illnesses but how can software houses clear their name when they continue to release lots of rubbish, such as The Lovers Guide and Leisure Suit Larry?

*Mr. R. Wright, Hampshire*

It's good to see PC owners with an attitude. The amount of sex and violence in computer games is somewhat worrying but the law has been changed fairly recently and all computer games of a suspect nature are now suitably classified much in the same way as cinema classifications.

Pornography downloaded from a BBS is a lot more difficult to control. The government is taking this virus extremely seriously (although, it's questionable as to whether politicians can take anything seriously) and is supposedly taking measures to ensure that the spread of this material is minimized as much as possible.

The majority of commercial software is of good taste and the software houses know that most PC owners take their games seriously and would not take kindly to games of an immature nature.

It would be interesting to know what other PC owners think. Get your views sent in. **2/7/81**

## internal wrongs?

I am writing to complain as a concerned parent, about your latest issue of PC Action - in particular the article entitled Sexploitation.

It is bad enough feeling concerned about the violence of computer games without having to worry that magazines like yours are thrusting virtually naked women before our childrens' eyes. Maybe the write-up was of interest to some people - I don't know because I was too irritated by the pictures to read it! Surely, not all those photographs were necessary?

How do you know that you are not encouraging young men to buy the real pornographic magazines? I really think you ought to look at your standards and quite frankly I am surprised that you should print such offensive material.

Do you have any control over the actual illustrations or are you guided by your marketing men who think that semi-clad females will sell just about anything?

*D. Winger, Northampton, £50 Winner*

While I agree with you that it is worrying for parents when there is quite a high degree of violence in computer games. I certainly am not of the same opinion when you say that we at PC Action are thrusting virtually naked woman before childrens' eyes.

Research shows that the majority of people reading PC magazines come from the 25 to 35 age group, which makes them responsible adults capable of excepting the pictures shown in the Sexploitation article which were meant for demonstrative purposes only.

It was important to show pictures in order to demonstrate the kind of material that is available in the UK in both games and bulletin boards. We deliberately censored anything that could have been interpreted as distasteful and can assure the readers of PC Action that the article was intended to educate people and inform them of the dangers of computer pornography and to explain exactly what is being done about it.

**'It's nice to see a magazine run by a woman'**

Sexploitation was not intended to be degrading to women at all and was written to highlight the continuing social pressures that women find themselves under every day.

If you found the article shocking then it worked. But instead of writing in to us who are most certainly on your side write to your MP about the problem and let's do something! **2/7/81**

## sexy mag?

I thought I would put pen to paper just to let you know that I think PC Action is by far the best PC games magazine in the UK. It is colourful, beautifully designed and contains a number of great articles.

It's nice to see a magazine run by a woman and one that appears to genuinely care about her readers, unlike some male editors. My only gripe is that I found the coverdisks a little awkward to use. Keep up the good work and I'll definitely keep on buying the mag.

*Miss J. Barnard, Newcastle*

Thank you very much for your kind comments about PC Action and indeed our illustrious editor. When we first set about designing PC Action we wanted a magazine that was mature, easy to follow and very informative. We believe we've successfully managed to bring all these qualities together. And don't worry, the coverdisks have been considerably improved to make them much easier to use.

We're very pleased that you like the result and promise you can look forward to bigger and brighter things in the near future. **2/7/81**

## Q&A

If you have a question related to the computer industry, or even an answer for one of our troubled readers send your questions and answers to the address at the top of the page but mark them Q & A Department.

**Q: Programmers and graphic artists are heralded as stars these days but how much can a professional programmer or artist expect to earn in a year?**

**A: At the dawn of the home computer, most programmers worked by themselves writing games in their bedrooms.**

Eventually, groups of programmers and graphics artists got together in order to minimize the workload and maximize the output quality, and the development team was born.

One of the most successful development teams of the '80s was Imagine, creators of such classics as Atic Atac, Alien 8 and SabreWulf. Eugene Evans, only 17 at the time and writing games with the Imagine development team, was earning £40,000 in 1983 when he became head programmer.

On average a person fulfilling either a programming or graphic artist role can earn around £15,000 to £30,000 a year.

**Q: I am interested in programming my PC but do not know how to start. I have seen much reference to Assembly, Disassembly, C and BASIC. What are these?**

**A: The most common programming language is BASIC (Beginners All Purpose Symbolic Instruction Code) which was written so that humans could understand it. It is fairly slow as the computer has to interpret it into its own language.**

Assembly language is a language created by humans but is assembled into raw computer data before it is executed. It is fast but difficult to learn. Disassembly is the exact opposite.

Ç is a modular language that is easy to learn and very powerful. Most PC programmers use this language.

### DO YOU KNOW THE ANSWER?

**Q: My friend and I are trying to learn to program our PCs. Can anyone tell us what Boolean Algebra is and how it is used?**

*D. Porter, Manchester*

**Q: I'm always being told by friends that IBM was the first company to produce the PC. Can you shed a little light on the beginnings of IBM?**

*J. Setin, Hastings*

opinions



# ReelMagic

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## ALL YOUR GAMES

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## TV AND FILM QUALITY

ReelMagic displays 25 frames of real video every second, even when the whole screen is used. This is second, even when UK television broadcasts and the same rate as UK TV broadcasts (PAL). It can ensure that ReelMagic games and films are of equal quality to normal UK TV broadcasts (PAL), as used in also display 24 frames per second (fps), as used in films, or 30 fps for the American TV standard NTSC.

## HIGH RESOLUTIONS

ReelMagic, unlike other video cards, can display full moving pictures at resolutions of up to 1024 x 768 with no loss of speed or quality.

## UNDER £400 - A WORLD FIRST!

Other MPEG (Digital Video) compatible PC cards cost thousands of pounds. ReelMagic costs just £399 including VAT!

## 386 AND 486 PC COMPATIBLE

The ReelMagic card works independently of your processor and will play films and games at the same speed on a 386sx 25MHz PC as it would on a 486dx!

## EASY TO FIT

ReelMagic is a single easy to fit plug-in card for your PC. It uses industry standard ISA BUS technology to ensure compatibility and simple fitting.

## DIGITAL VIDEO - WORLD STANDARD

Digital Video is a world wide standard supported by JVC, Philips, Samsung, GoldStar, Sony and many more.

## VIDEO PLAYBACK SPECIFICATIONS

- MPEG-1 Video Standard
- Full Compliance with ISO CD 11172
- Colours - 32,768 Colours in Any Mode
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- Dependent on Existing VGA/SVGA Card
- Frames/Sec (fps) - 30fps (NTSC); 25fps (PAL); 24fps (Film) Sustained Frame Rate
- Overlay - VGA Chromakey

## AUDIO SPECIFICATIONS

- MPEG Sound Standard - Layers I & II
- Playback - 8 & 16-bit Stereo PCM 44.1kHz Sample Rate
- Synthesiser - Yamaha OPL2
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## DRIVE OPTIONS

To use ReelMagic you need a PC compatible CD-ROM drive and interface. We recommend the following CD-ROM drives to you.

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## FULL SCREEN vs 1/4 SCREEN

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## A NEW GENERATION OF GAMES

Computer games featuring real actors and video footage are now in development.

## FILMS ON YOUR PC

With ReelMagic and a CD-ROM drive, watch movies, pop videos and other video clips on your PC!

## DIGITAL VIDEO COMPATIBLE

Digital Video, (VideoCD), allows a single CD disc to hold 74 minutes of film and sound. ReelMagic is fully compatible with Digital Video. There will be 50 top films released on the Digital Video Standard in early 1994.

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<b>LONDON SHOP:</b> Opening Hours: Mon-Sat 9.30am-7.00pm	Selfridges (Basement Area), Oxford Street, London, W1A 1AB	Tel: 071-629 1234 Extension: 3914
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<b>ESSEX SHOP:</b> Opening Hours: Mon-Fri 9.30am-5.30pm (Sat 9.00am-6.00pm)	Keddies (2nd Floor), High Street, Southend-on-Sea, Essex, SS1 1LA	Tel: 0702 468039 Fax No: 0702 468039
<b>IPSWICH SHOP:</b> Opening Hours: Mon-Fri 9.30am-5.30pm (Sat 9.00am-6.00pm)	Debenhams (2nd Floor), Waterloo House, Westgate St, Ipswich, IP1 3EH	Tel: 0473 287092 Fax No: 0473 287092

To: Silica, PCACT-0294-123, 1-4 The Mews, Hatherley Rd, Sidcup, Kent, DA14 4DX

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Which computer(s), if any, do you own? ..... 123C

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**I**ove 'em or hate 'em, role-playing games are here to stay. They've appeared in all sorts of guises – top-down 2-D and 3-D views, first-person perspective, single and multiple character, but what they all have in common is hours and hours of entertaining gameplay. Here we look at a range of role-playing games that have frustrated and entertained over the last couple of years.

## 1. ULTIMA UNDERWORLD I AND II

These have got to be the ultimate in role-playing experiences and provide the standard by which pretenders to the throne will be judged for some time to come. The first, sub-titled *The Stygian Abyss*, was launched in 1992 and brought a completely new dimension to the world of role-playing.

It combines superb graphics, atmospheric sound effects and a very easy-to-use point-and-click interface to launch you into a virtual reality 3-D environment where smoothly scrolling movement is so realistic you get that feeling of really being there.

The plot is simple. As the Avatar you must search a maze of dungeons for Baron Almaric's daughter. The dungeons are alive with strange monsters, some of which are friendly and others that will have the hide off your back as soon as they look at you.

It's not simply a matter of bashing everything that moves. You must also converse with the inhabitants whenever you can because it is only by doing so that you will reveal the secrets of the Abyss and become embroiled in the many sub-quests that are available.

The only criticisms levelled at the game are the small viewing window and the fact that the characters became very blocky when seen in close up. Other than that it's a really enjoyable romp that before the arrival of its sequel, was the best thing since sliced bread.

The follow up, *Labyrinth of Worlds*, dealt with all the criticisms levelled at its predecessor. It's fairly similar in appearance but much bigger, better and the plot is even more complex.

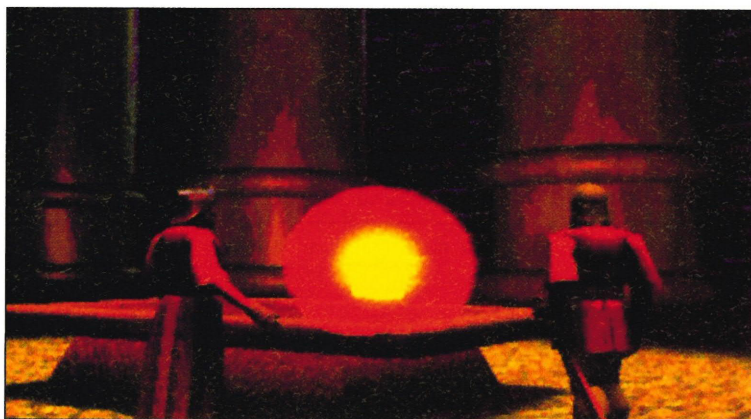
The Guardian has enveloped Lord British's castle in a black gem with you, the Avatar, still inside it. As the hero of the previous challenge you are expected to do something about the situation, and by talking to the locals you can uncover clues as to your next moves.

The improvements on *Abyss* are tremendous. Gone are the blocky characters when you get close to them, the viewing window is larger and the graphical detail on the various worlds has to be seen to be believed.

This game is enormous – eight worlds, each with their own sub-plot and several levels. The clever feature is that each world is connected to a central teleporter core, rather like the spokes in a wheel linked to the cog. So moving from one world to another, which you will have to do regularly, does not involve retracing your steps over several levels.

Both games are excellent value for money, although the first is now a rather bit dated.

**ELECTRONIC ARTS**



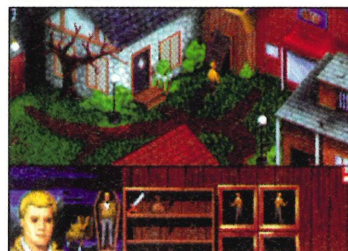
## 2. ULTIMA VII THE SERPENT ISLE

This is the eighth game in the Ultima series – not to be confused with the *Underworld* series – and each has been an improvement on its predecessor. It uses an isometric top-down view of the game world and features detailed colourful graphics, stunning atmospheric sounds, devious puzzles and, as always, a complex plot.

It continues where *Ultima VII The Black Gate* left off and as such doesn't offer a great deal that's new. Lord British once again needs your help to find Batlin, the Guardian's human servant and bring him to justice. As in the previous games, you control four characters and then using a point-and-click interface you go off and explore the world of Britannia.

The action involves combat using might or magic, but more important is the continuous interaction with various computer characters. The more you talk to them, the more you will get out in response to unravel the complicated storyline. And they react differently to male and female players.

**ELECTRONIC ARTS**



## 3. DARKSUN: SHATTERED LANDS

SSI's release features a completely new game engine with a combat system based on AD&D rules. It uses a smoothly scrolling plan view and a point-and-click interface to pitch your party of four into a colourful world of strange creatures in which you must survive or perish.

Whereas most games of this kind gradually reveal a level as you explore it, *Shattered Lands* loads each complete level from disk and by moving the mouse to the extremities of the screen you can view the whole thing as a miniature map any time you want. At this point you can click on the location you want to go to and you go automatically, access permitting.

Unfortunately it is tediously slow, even on a high-spec machine, particularly the level loading sequence. Apart from that it sports superb, detailed graphics and provides hours and hours of gameplay.

**US GOLD**

## 4. EYE OF THE BEHOLDER II

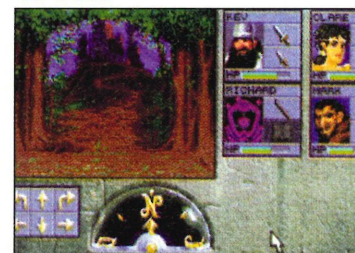
Before *Underworld* appeared, this series was about the best you could get. It offers exploration, puzzles and combat using a 3-D first-person perspective. You control four characters that you can create at the start or use a set of the ready-made chappies.

You must search around several levels, collecting items and killing baddies as you progress, with your fighters increasing in strength and stature and your magic user's spell book growing in content.

The lack of a magic mapping feature means you have to resort to the old graph paper to keep track of your exploits, and this is particularly vital on later levels where you'll encounter illusionary walls and secret doors.

Good graphics and animation make an entertaining game and the easy-to-use point-and-click interface make it very playable. *EOB III* is the latest incarnation but offers nothing new and is significantly overshadowed by the *Underworld* games.

**US GOLD**



## 5. DUNGEON HACK

Originates from a shareware challenge called *NetHack* that has been around since before the advent of the home computer. It was a massive game that simply used Ascii characters to create a plan view of the dungeon and its contents. *Dungeon Hack* however adds a 3-D first-person perspective and animated characters.

With each new game all the mazes and their contents are randomly generated. Add to this an option to customise your own dungeon, for example the number of levels, the monster difficulty and the amount of food available, and you have a series of challenges with so much variety that you'll never tire of them.

Its only failing is that the puzzles aren't particularly taxing so it may not appeal to true RPG buffs who like to test the old grey matter. Nevertheless it's a great idea that is ideal for those new to role-playing and fans of the original *NetHack* who want to see their best game in glorious animated colour.

**US GOLD**



# I V e Role-Playing

## 6. SHADOWCASTER

Although not strictly a fully-fledged role-playing game, we've included this because it's so near to being one it might as well be classed as such. It features the same first-person perspective game world as the Underworld series and the same super scrolling movement.

It's strictly a monster bashing exercise, with some elements of looking after your hit and power points thrown in for good measure.

What is unique is that although you represent a single character, a human called Kirt, he can morph (shape change) into any one of six other beasts, each with its own special capabilities, such as casting spells, healing quickly and surviving under water, providing, that is, you've found the six obelisks that give you access to these characters.

The graphics are detailed and very atmospheric and the magic mapping facility ensures a very enjoyable game that will provide hours of entertainment.

**ELECTRONIC ARTS**



## 7. LEGEND

You control four characters – Berskerker, Runemaster, Assassin and Troubadour – in a top-down isometric 3-D set of dungeon mazes, exploring and generally causing mayhem among the inhabitants. A point-and-click interface is available for best effect but control may also be brought into play via the keyboard.

The scenario mainly consists of searching for keys to locked doors and solving fairly complex puzzles that involve one or more of your characters doing the right thing or being in the right place at the right time. There're lots of gold and valuables to be found that you can use outside the dungeons for buying better equipment such as armour, weapons and magical potions.

The magic system is one of the best you'll come across and once mastered is very easy to use. The graphics are very detailed and colourful and the cartoon-like characters give the game a sense of fun. An automapping feature is also a welcome addition.

**MINDSCAPE**

## 8. DARKLANDS

An average attempt at an RPG from the masters of flight sims. It's set in Medieval Germany rather than a fantasy world and as a result there's no magic, just praying to the saints for divine help.

It features a top-down view of your party of four in exploration and combat, interspersed with regular trips to towns and villages where the interaction is via multiple choice options from a drop-down menu.

It also boasts the most comprehensive set of stats of any role-player we've seen, but they are difficult to read and become a pain after a while. It will appeal to those who like juggling with masses of information but action folk will be disappointed.

**MICROPROSE**



## 9. VEIL OF DARKNESS

This is a bold attempt at recreating the vampire myth on computer and has some interesting plot twists using the same game engine as The Summoning.

It features the same overhead 3-D isometric view and the identical easy-to-use point-and-click interface to control your single character.

The animation is a bit on the iffy side, but one of its better points is the ability to select the mode of combat – easy, simplified or full. These determine how much time is devoted to the fight sequences and allow puzzle fans to spend less time bashing monsters.

It's not that bad a game, it's just that it could have been so much better.

**US GOLD**



## 10. LEGENDS OF VALOUR

Tipped to knock Underworld off its perch this is a smooth scrolling, first-person perspective challenge but it uses

a very small viewing window. There's plenty of combat but minimal interaction with computer controlled characters, and as a result there's very little depth.

Some of the graphics are quite atmospheric and there's quite a lot to do, from joining guilds to taking on jobs as sub-quests, but there are tedious periods of wandering around doing nothing.

It's pleasant, with enough ample things to keep you playing for some time but it could have been great with a little more effort.

**US GOLD**



## 11. WAXWORKS

More gruesome graphics from the team that brought you Elvira II: Jaws of Cerberus. It features four time zones through which you must travel to rescue one of your friend. It employs a standard point-and-click interface with single tile movement.

It features some of the most gory graphics you'll encounter on a computer, depicting the various ways in which you come to an untimely end, which unfortunately happens far too often and far too easily for comfort.

Regular attacks by graveyard zombies and Egyptian guards among others, as you attempt to solve some quite intricate puzzles, result in frustrating but absorbing gameplay.

**ACCOLADE**



## 12. SHADOWLANDS

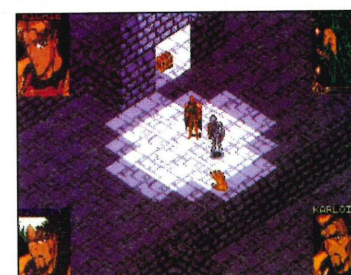
Another 3-D isometric top-down job which has plenty of puzzles based on switches and levers being open or closed to activate doors or disarm traps.

An unusual feature is that the party can be split up and each have a separate adventure in different parts of the dungeon. Another novelty is the

use made of light or rather the lack of it. The whole place is in darkness except round the party's light source which creates a terrific atmosphere.

There's little or no verbal interaction with other characters – it's basically kill everything that moves. The control system is easy to use but the graphics are now a rather dated.

**DOMARK**



## 13. THE SUMMONING

Another 3-D isometric affair and one of the better and more complex ones. A host of missions and sub-quests must be completed in order to be able to build up the strength and skill of your single character.

There are puzzles galore involving logic and magical items as you try to progress through 40 levels of infested dungeons and castles. Interaction with other characters is essential if you are not to miss out on vital information that will provide clues as to what your next quest will be.

Graphics are OK but a little dated. A great game to play but very difficult to actually finish.

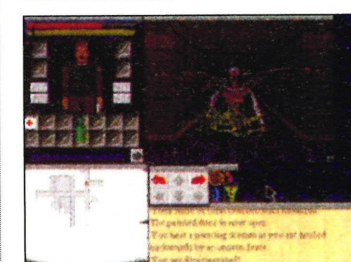
**US GOLD**

## 14. THE LEGACY

One of the increasing number of horror games that have appeared over the last couple of years. You play from a first-person perspective and move around in steps rather than smoothly scrolling. The different ghosts, ghouls and other gheeks that you come across in the game are well drawn and scary.

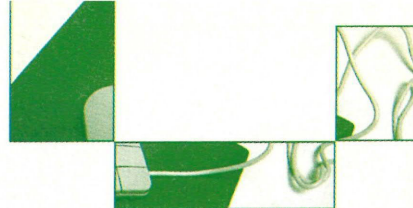
The game uses an innovative window system so that you are able to lay out the screen display just as you want it, including enlarging the viewing window.

**MICROPROSE**





# catalog



**EVERY MONTH PC ACTION IS PROUD TO OFFER YOU THE LATEST CONTACTS WITHIN THE PC GAMING WORLD. EVERYTHING YOU COULD NEED TO KNOW FROM PD TO BBS, VIRUSES TO GAMES, CAN BE FOUND HERE, ACCOMPANIED BY CONTACT NAMES AND TELEPHONE NUMBERS. THE INFORMATION IS UPDATED EVERY MONTH TO ALLOW YOU TO KEEP AHEAD IN THE EVER EVOLVING WORLD OF THE PC.**

## public domain (p.d.)

Welcome to the world of PD, a world in which utilities, applications, demos and games are available at an affordable price. PD disks vary in price from just £1 to £10. For a full list of available PD and shareware software contact these companies:

Advantage	0242 224340
Argent Shareware	0603 812888
Benetech Systems	0533 600033
Classic Software	0472 359957
CMB Software	0388 662875
Data Soft	031 2282153
D & E Software Services	0703 634120
Diamond Int. Shareware	021 5588958
	021 5556886
EC Software	0484 460070
Ensign Systems	081 7782871
	081 7768477
Global trading	041 2484487
Joint Venture	0268 754522
	0268 757919
Kingsway Computer Serv.	0742 750623
LibraSoft	0274 734594
Links PD & Shareware	0706 360676
Magnetic Fields	0706 360676
Metric Computers	0705 827943
Nildram Software	0442 890303
Omicron Systems	0702 710391
PCIUG	0732 771512
PCL Software Ltd	0332 678713
PDSL	0892 663298
Precision Software Apps.	0223 20828
PSA	0223 208288
PSP	0223 208288
Red Dragon	0745 338094
Shareware Connections	0417 751937
Shareware Elite	0326 564164
Shareware Marketing	0297 24088
Sheffield Library	0742 464561
Softcell Services	0443 238630
SpringSoft	0352 770049
SMS Shareware	0276 681864
TestWare	0423 886415
The Disk Park	0525 841731
Transcend Services Ltd	0274 622228
WiseOwl Software	0235 529808

## bulletin board systems (bbs)

BBS systems offer an incredible amount of free software for the price of a call. But be expected to upload software in order to download and maybe pay a membership fee.

CIX	081 399 5252
	081 390 1244
(Tricom Modems)	081 390 9787

(Hayes Ultra 96s)	081 390 1255
(Courier HSTs)	
Information	081 390 8446
CompuServe	
London	071 490 8881
(300/1200/2400/9600 bps)	
Birmingham	021 633 3474
(300/1200/2400 bps)	
Manchester	061 834 5533
(300/1200/2400 bps)	
Glasgow	041 204 1722
(300/1200/2400 bps)	
Cardiff	0222 344 184
(300/1200/2400 bps)	
Information	0800 289 378
Enterprise Info Sys.	081 951 5849
(HST)	081 951 5212
(V32bis)	081 952 7719
(V22/MNP5)	
Information	081 952 7513
Metric Computers	0705 871471
Microland BBS	0483 725 905
(View)	0891 990 505
(Download)	
V32bis, V32, V22bis, V22, V23 &	
HST. 8 Data Bits & No Parity	
Online Now	0839 661 188
	0839 661 199
(300/1200/240bps)	
Shareware Support	0442 891109

## top three shareware games

The PD and shareware scene is certainly packed with excellent demos, games, utilities and applications. These are the three most enjoyable games out on the market at the moment:

### 1. CD-Man

This comes across as an excellent Pac-Man conversion that's infinitely better than the original. Plenty of different levels and new graphics.

### 2. Commander Keen

Definitely the best shareware platform game on the market. You play a teenage hero stranded on the planet Mars who must escape back home.

### 3. Wolfenstein 3D

Although it has a fairly sensitive plot (killing Nazis for example), Wolfenstein still remains an all time favourite. Great graphics and atmosphere.

## the virus threat

Viruses are lethal program files that infect disks and damage their content, then transfer themselves onto other

disks. To keep your disks and system virus free, it is a good idea to use one of these commercial and shareware virus killers.

## commercial virus killers

- 1. All Safe**  
X-Tree (Software Paradise) 0222 887521  
£79
- 2. Anti-Virus Assist**  
Technocom 0753 534900  
£1,595
- 3. Anti-Virus Plus**  
Menhorah Software 081 8834269  
£79
- 4. Anti-Virus Toolkit DOS**  
S & S 0442 877877  
£99
- 5. Anti-Virus Toolkit Windows**  
S & S 0442 877877  
£125

## shareware virus killers

- 1. McAfee Virus Scan**  
PDSL (Code 3531) 0892 663298  
3.5inch £4.95  
5.25inch £5.15
- 2. McAfee Net Virus Tools**  
PDSL (Code 3532) 0892 663298  
3.5inch £4.95  
5.25inch £5.15
- 3. Integrity Master**  
PDSL (Code 3486) 0892 663298  
3.5inch £4.95  
5.25inch £5.15
- 4. SysGuard**  
PDSL (Code 3565) 0892 663298  
3.5inch £4.95  
5.25inch £5.15
- 5. F-PROT**  
PDSL (Code 3565) 0892 663298  
3.5inch £4.95  
5.25inch £5.15

## applications & peripherals

The PC is a powerful machine and its major strength lies in its application and hardware prowess. If it's wordprocessors, spreadsheets, art packages and various other serious software items that you are after, or even the latest printers, CD ROM drives, mice and other peripherals, you'll find everything your looking for under the sections below...

## best word processor

WordPerfect 6.0 £329  
WordPerfect Corporation 0932 850500

## best office workstation

Microsoft Office Professional 3.0 £745  
Microsoft 0734 270000  
Contains;  
Wordprocessor: Word 2.0  
Database: Access 1.1  
Spreadsheet: Excell 4.0  
Graphics Presentation: Powerpoint 3.0  
Electronic Mail (E-Mail): Mail 3.2

## best graphics package

CorelDRAW! 4.0  
Corel 0101 613 7283733  
£295 or £169 upgrade

## best mouse controller

Microsoft Mouse v2.0  
Microsoft 0734 270000  
£79 - bus  
£69 - serial

## best cd rom drive

NEC CDR 38 External  
NEC 081 9938111  
£285  
Transfer Rate 300Kb/s  
Access Time 400ms

## best multimedia presentation

Freelance Graphics (Windows 2.0)  
Lotus Development Corporation  
0784 455445  
£415

## best laserjet printer

Hewlett-Packard LaserJet 4  
Hewlett-Packard 0344 360000  
£1,449

## best inkjet printer

Hewlett-Packard DeskJet 510  
P&P 0706 832832  
£329

## best greyscale hand scanner

Logitech 256  
Crown Computer Supplies 0704 895815  
£175

## best colour hand scanner

Logitech Scanman Color  
Mediaware 0344 891313  
£289

## best journey planner

Autoroute Plus 6.01  
Next Base 0784 421422  
£395 or £85 upgrade

## joysticks

One of the most enjoyable pastimes for PC owners is playing games, but it's a common known fact that frustration can creep in when your joystick has severe problems keeping up with your gameplaying skills. That's why it is so important to have the best. So look no further as within these pages you'll find all the latest information.

- 1. Speedking**  
Konix £14.99 0495 350101  
Analog & Digital
- 2. The Bug**  
Cheetah £14.99 0222 867777

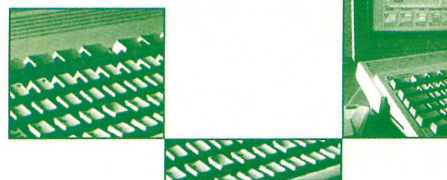
**3. Gravis Analog Pro**  
SpectraVideo £59.99 081 9000024

**4. Thunder Stick**  
Kraft/VizTrade £39.99 0444 239999

**5. Free Wheel**  
Logic 3/SpectraVideo 081 9000024  
£34.99



# catalog



**6. Digital-to-Analog Adaptor**  
EuroMax £15.99 0262 601006

## the hit list

If you feel you need to contact a software house for either product information, a complaint or perhaps even praise, then simply check out the list below for the number. Companies in brackets are ones whose products are being distributed by the company whose number they are under.

Accolade 081 8770880  
Addictive 081 8048100  
Alternative 0977 797777  
Audiogenic 081 4242244  
Beau Jolly 0737 222003  
Codemasters 0926 814132  
Core Design 0332 297797  
CP Software 0993 823463  
CyberDreams 071 328 3267  
D&H Games 0462 816103  
Daze Marketing 071 3282762  
(Silmarils)  
Digital Integration 0276 684959  
(Loriciels)  
Domark 081 7802222  
Electronic Arts 0753 549442  
(360)  
(Broderbund)  
(Mindcraft)  
(Origin)  
(SSG)  
Entertainment Int. 0268 541126  
(Empire)  
(ReadySoft)  
Europress Software 0625 859333  
Impressions 071 3512133  
Infogrames 071 7388199

(Disney Software)  
Interplay 0865 390029  
Jumping Bean 0602 2972838  
Kompakt UK Ltd 0727 868005  
(Blue Byte)  
(Colorado Technologies)  
(Internece)  
(Oxford Softworks)  
(Storm Computers)  
Konami 081 4292446  
Krisalis 0709 372290  
Maxis 071 4902333  
MicroProse 0454 329510  
Microvalue 0661 860260  
(Flair Software)  
Millenium 0223 844894  
Mindscape 0444 246333  
Mirage 0260 299909  
Ocean 061 8326633  
Psygnosis 051 7095755  
Renegade 071 7023643  
Sierra On-Line 0734 303171  
(Dynamix)  
(Coktel Vision)  
The Software Business 0480 496497  
Sales Curve 071 5853308  
(Storm)  
Supervision 071 7029391  
Titus 071 7002119  
UBI Soft 081 3439055  
US Gold 021 6253366  
(Access)  
(Delphine)  
(PDQ Distribution)  
(SSI)  
(LucasFilms)  
(NovaLogic)  
(New World Computing)  
Virgin Games 081 9602255  
Zeppelin 091 3857755

## software fix and patches

Nothing proves more annoying than purchasing software only to find that it is bugged in certain areas. If you have any such games it may be worth your while checking the list below to see if the companies responsible have released a bug fix. These not only correct problems but may often also improve the original game. Most are available from reputable bulletin boards or the software companies themselves. This list will be updated every month.

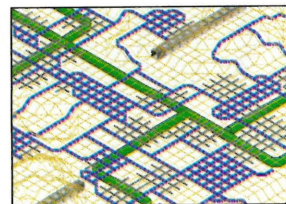
company	game effect	version	effect
Access	Amazon	Raft bug	?
Access	Countdown	?	General Fix
Access	Links 386 Pro	?	General Fix
Accolade	Elvira: Mistress of the Dark	1.2	General Fix
Accolade	Grand Prix Unlimited	1.4	General Fix
Accolade	Jack Nicklaus Signature Edition	1.51	General Fix
Bethesda	Hockey League Simulator 2	1.11	General Fix
Bethesda	Wayne Gretsky Hockey 3	1.1	General Fix
CyberDreams	DarkSeed	1.5	General Fix
Dynamix	A-10 Tank Killer 1.5	?	Joystick/Mouse Fix
Dynamix	Aces of the Pacific	1.2	General Fix
Dynamix	Aces of the Pacific 1946 Disk	?	General Fix
Dynamix	Front Page Sports Football	?	Enhancements
Impressions	Air Bucks	1.2	General Fix
Impressions	Caesar	?	General Fix
Interplay	Bard's Tale Construction Set	1.3	General Fix
Interplay	Battlechess II	?	General Fix
Interplay	Buzz Aldrin's Race into Space	?	General Fix
Interplay	Castles	?	General Fix
LucasArts	Indiana Jones & Fate of Atlantis	?	486 Fix
LucasArts	Indiana Jones & Last Crusade	?	486 SoundBlaster Fix
LucasArts	Secret of Monkey Island	?	486 SoundBlaster Fix
LucasArts	Secret Weapons of the Luftwaffe	2.1	General Fix
LucasArts	SWOTL P-38 Disk	?	Speed Fix
LucasArts	Finest Hour-Battle of Britain	?	General/Joystick calibration Fix

LucasArts	X-Wing	?	Roland soundcard Fix
LucasArts	X-Wing	?	SoundCard I/O Fix
Maxis	A-Train	1.02	General Fix
Maxis	Sim Earth	?	Install routine Fix
Maxis	SimLife	2	General Fix
Merit	Maelstrom	1.1	General Fix
Merit	Tom Landry Strategy Football	1.03	General Fix
MicroProse	B17 Flying Fortress	2	General Update
MicroProse	Civilisation	5	General Fix
MicroProse	Command HQ	1.97	General Fix
MicroProse	Darklands	7	General Fix
MicroProse	F-15 III	3	General Fix
MicroProse	F117A Stealth Fighter	4	General Fix
MicroProse	Formula 1 Grand Prix	1.05	Modem Update
MicroProse	Global Conquest	?	Modem Update
MicroProse	Gunship 2000	6	General Fix
MicroProse	Gunship 2000 Islands & Ice	85	General Fix
MicroProse	Harrier Jump Jet	?	ThrustMaster Fix
MicroProse	Knights of the Sky	4	General Fix
MicroProse	Pirates Gold!	?	General Fix
MicroProse	Rex Nebular	8.49	General Fix
MicroProse	Silent Service II	3	General Fix
MicroProse	Task Force 1942	411x1.1	General Fix
MicroProse	UMS 2	1.71	General Fix
MicroProse	UMS 2 Planet Editor	1.6.6	General Fix
Mindcraft	Ambush at Sorinor	1.02	General Fix
Mindcraft	Magic Candle II	2	General Fix
Mindcraft	Magic Candle III	1.16	General Fix
Mindcraft	Rules of Engagement	1.08	General Fix
Mindcraft	Siege	1.2	General Fix
Mindcraft	Star Legions	?	General Fix
Mindcraft	Tegel's Mercenaries	1.2	General Fix
New World	Might & Magic 4-Clouds of Xeen	?	General Fix
NovaLogic	Comanche: Maximum Overkill	1BB	General Fix
Omnitrend	Rules of Engagement 2	1.05	General Fix
Origin	Ultima Underworld	?	General Fix
Origin	Ultima Underworld II	?	General Fix
Origin	Ultima VII	3.4	General Fix
Origin	Wing Commander: Special Ops I	?	General Fix
Paragon	Mantis	?	Floppy Version Fix
Paragon	MegaTraveller II	1.02	General Fix
Paragon	Twilight 2000	?	Colonel's Update
Sierra	Island of Dr Brain	?	General Fix
Sierra	Mixed Up Mother Goose MPC	?	SoundSource Driver Fix
Sierra	Police Quest I	?	General Fix
Sierra	Police Quest III	?	Mouse Fix
Sierra	Quest for Glory I	?	VGA Fix
Sierra	Quest for Glory III	B	General Fix
Sierra	Space Quest IV	1.052	General Fix
Sierra	Space Quest V	?	General Fix
Sierra	Willy Beamish	?	General Fix
Sir-Tech	Crusaders of the Dark Savant	2	General Fix
Spectrum HB	Crisis in the Kremlin	1.01	General Fix
Spectrum HB	Falcon 3.0	3.0d	General Fix
Spectrum HB	Operation Fighting Tiger	3.01.1	General Fix
Spectrum HB	Tank	1.1	General Fix
SSI	Dark Queen of Krynn	?	Gameplay Fix
SSI	Eye of the Beholder II	1.1	General Fix
SSI	Great Naval Battles	1.2	General Fix
SSI	Pacific War	1.0x10	General Fix
SSI	Prophecy of the Shadow	1.1	SoundBlaster Fix
SSI	Spelljammer	?	General Fix
SSI	Tony Larussa 2	1.1	General Fix
SSI	Tony Larussa Fantasy Manager	?	Stadiums Disk bug Fix
SSI	Ultimate Baseball	1.1	General Fix
SSI	Unlimited Adventures	1.1	General Fix
Three-Sixty	Harpoon	1.32A	General Fix
Three-Sixty	Harpoon (386 Version)	1.32A	General Fix
Three-Sixty	MegaFortress	?	General Fix
Three-Sixty	Patriot	1.1	General Fix
Three-Sixty	V for Victory	3.1	General Fix
Velocity	JetFighter II	?	General Fix
Virgin	Deluxe Scrabble	?	General Fix
Virgin	Dune II	?	General Fix
Virgin	The Seventh Guest	?	General Fix
White Wolf	Empire Deluxe	3.1	General Fix
White Wolf	The Perfect General	1.02	General Fix



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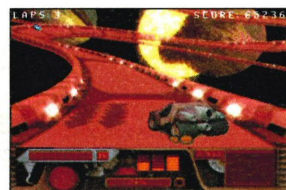
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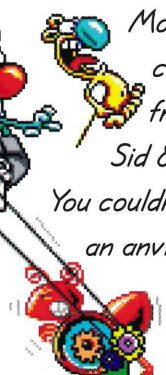


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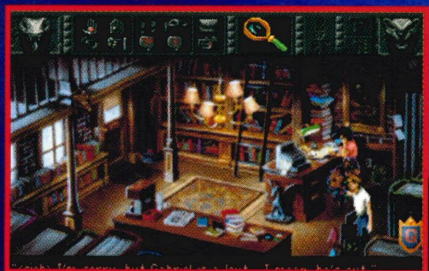




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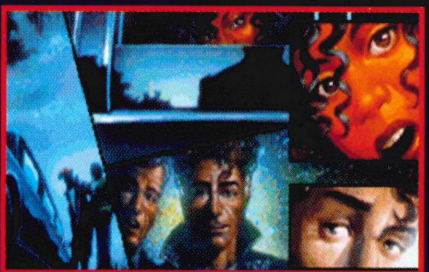
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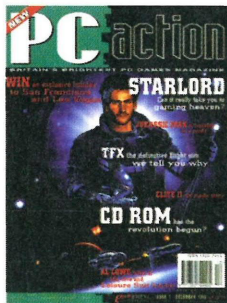
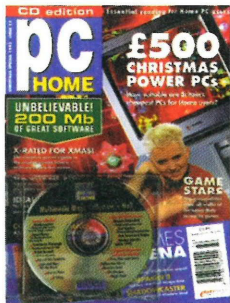
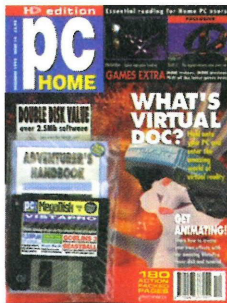
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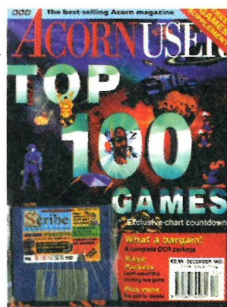
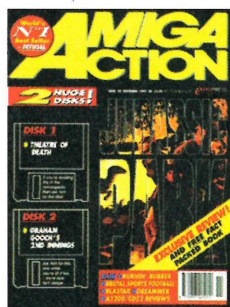
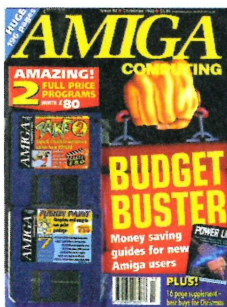
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19 January 1994

Dear Advertiser,

Here we are again to welcome you into 1994 with this complimentary copy of **PC Action** which is once again packed with news, reviews, in-depth features and all things relevant to the world of PC gaming.

And our New Year resolution is to keep to the high standards which made **PC Action** the most sophisticated and exciting of the new PC games magazine launches of 1993.

We've already been first off the starting line with an early report on the Las Vegas CES and there will be lots more from the USA in our March issue. We've also got some feature exclusives under our belts and excellent cover disk deals arranged.

And there's one particularly exciting piece of news concerning **PC Action** which will be hitting with the April issue. More of that nearer the time.

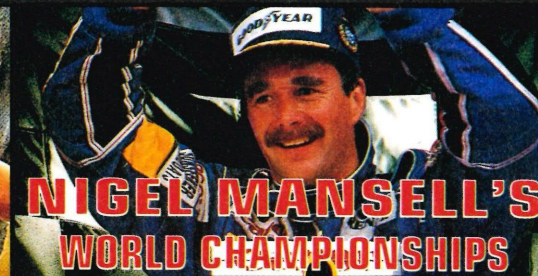
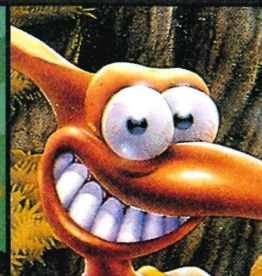
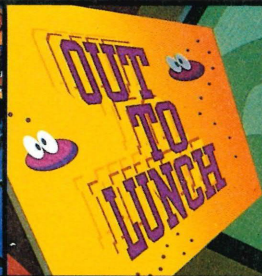
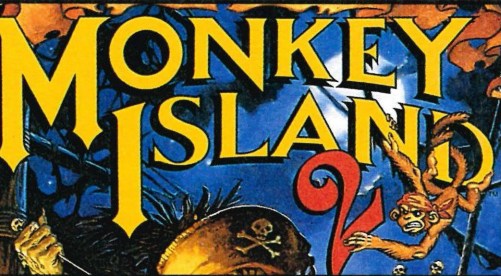
Dive into the mainstream of PC gaming by ringing myself or Helen Cartwright on 0625 850874 or 0625 878888.

Yours sincerely

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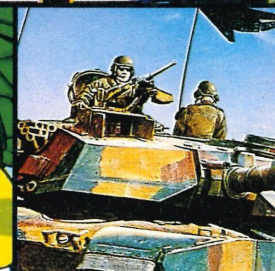
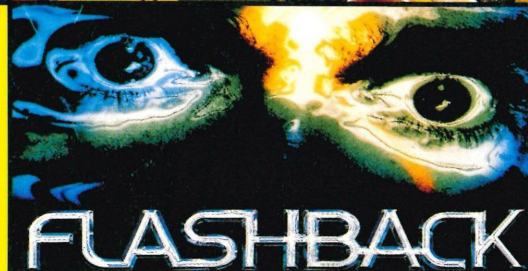


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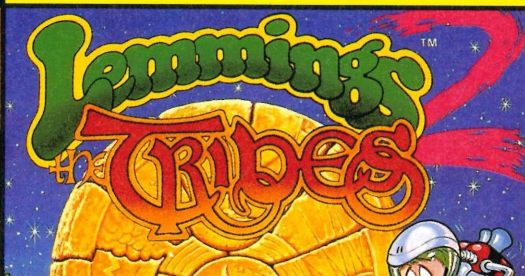
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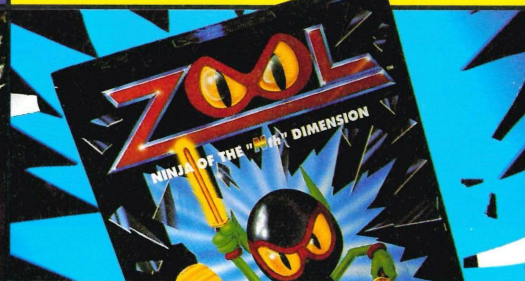
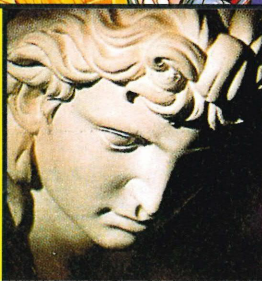
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